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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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VOLUME IV

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. IV. JANUARY, 1915 No. 1

To abide by one's Ideal necessitates undaunted courage, unfailing vigor, unwavering trust and selfless aspiration. In opposition we must be fearless, in failure we must be undepressed, in moments of darkness we must have faith, while love of our task must make us forget ourselves and all thought of gain or loss. These are the lofty virtues which adorn the life of every great messenger of Light. It is not that a message of Truth is always welcomed by everyone. It is not that noble efforts are at once crowned with success. Nor is the path always smooth and clear. There is but one way open to us by which we may prove ourselves worthy of our Ideal and follow with whole-hearted devotion the voice of Truth. "Regarding alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, fight thou the battle. Thus sin will not touch thee." This is the secret of all right activity. In this battle of life we must rise above self-seeking and learn to do our part with no other motive than to accomplish with the greatest efficiency whatever we undertake. When we have something to give to the world, we must be willing to give it for the mere joy of giving, without stopping to see whether the world recognizes our effort or not. Ours is to do what is laid before us with bravery, perseverance and infinite patience. Let us offer to the Supreme all the fruits of our labor. May He consecrate our life and activity.

WISDOM AND DEVOTION

(*Jnana* and *Bhakti*)

By Swami Ramakrishnananda.

Jnana (wisdom) and *Bhakti* (devotion) are inseparably connected. There is a constant hankering in the mind of every man to know. Man's desire for knowledge is almost insatiable; and only when he will be able to say, "I have known all, nothing is left to be known," will his desire for knowledge be satiated. That is to say, nothing short of omniscience will satisfy him. Wisdom means that effulgent condition by which all things are known. Man does not bring this wisdom into existence. It is there all the time. Wisdom lives in the heart of every living being, but we do not perceive it because thick clouds of ignorance obscure it. The five *koshas* or sheaths (body, senses, mind, intellect and the sense of "I") are the five clouds that hide the Truth. Some people claim that these clouds can be dispelled by *Jnana* or wisdom alone, that by sheer denial of the unreal we shall be able to realize the Truth. They hold that by wisdom without *Bhakti* or devotion one can know God. Let us see whether it is possible without *Bhakti* for a man to know the self-existent, self-luminous Principle or God, and to be able to identify himself with That.

What is this "I" of which we speak? First we identify ourselves with the body. But the "I" existed before the body. Suppose a man comes to realize this, will he then be able to know God? No. Even if he recognizes that he is separate from the body and goes from one body to another, he must still be a limited being, for only a limited being can go from one place to another. Is it possible for the infinite to move from place to place? No; infinity is everywhere and hence cannot move from one place to another. And true wisdom is infinite. Now this "I" who is Mr. A. today, who was Mr. B.

in the past and will be Mr. C. in the future, is it possible for this "I" ever to realize infinite wisdom? No; for as we have said, it goes from one body to another, so it must be finite. But, you may claim, it is constantly increasing, developing, growing in knowledge; therefore it might end by knowing as much as God Himself. This is not possible; for even after many cycles the amount of knowledge it has must be a finite amount; hence compared to infinity it is infinitesimally small and so cannot realize infinite wisdom.

Then how shall we be able to realize it? It is not possible for this limited "I" to know all; yet there is always the hankering to become omniscient. How shall we satisfy this desire? Evidently this is not the proper method, since it is not possible for the finite mind to know the whole of the universe, because eternally it will remain finite. The sages, however, teach us that the limited, individual ego is not man's true nature. The ambitious soul of man will not be satisfied with a part only. Man will not be at rest until he can say, "Nothing remains to be known. I have known all." Then how can it be attained, this wisdom? The dualists say it cannot be reached. God, the eternal, omniscient One, is eternally there and we are eternally here. The only thing we can do is to make friends with Him. "He is infinitely powerful; I am weak. If I go against His will I shall suffer; so I must be careful not to displease Him. How can I obey Him? He has certain laws given in the Scriptures. If I follow these laws, then gradually love will rise in my heart and I shall glory in obeying the Lord. I shall be glad to do whatever he asks of me. Even if he wishes me to kill my son, as in the case of Abraham and Isaac, I shall gladly give him up to Him, believing that God has only taken His own child."

The man who has reached this state of mind will not find fault with anything that happens in the universe, because all

happens by God's will. So, submitting himself constantly to the Supreme Will, he becomes identified with God, although he keeps himself separate from the Lord as a servant is separate from the master. A servant is in reality only a projection of the master. A man wishes to do more than one body can accomplish, so he buys another body and mind to do his work. They belong to another, but they are really used by him as if they were his own; so master and servant are not really separate. Yet they are also not really one and the same. They are related as a man's hand is to his body. The hand forms a part of the body, serves it and acts only as it wills, but it is still distinct from it. This is known as *Bhakti* or devotion. It is reached by annihilating egoism, by destroying the self-willed nature of man.

Sri Ramakrishna used to illustrate this relation by the story of two fields—one higher than the other. The upper field is filled with water, the lower one is dry. The owner, to water the lower field, makes a channel through which the water may flow. The water flows freely so long as the level of the water in the lower field does not rise as high as that of the upper field. When the level is the same, the flow ceases and they become like one body of water. Then every ripple on the surface of one is communicated to the other. So it is with the true devotee. When he rises to the level of God, the two become one and the same; and the waves of God's thoughts go through the mind of the devotee. Our Master used to tell another story of three dolls, one of stone, one of cloth, and the third of salt. All three were great friends. One day they wished to take a sea-bath. The first went into the ocean and came back unchanged. The second after going in could hardly drag itself out of the water; and once on land it smelled of the sea, tasted of the sea, and was all full of the salt water. The third never came back. The first is the worldly man;

the second is the *Bhakta* or devotee, who is full of Divine love and bliss; and the third is the *Jnani* (the follower of the path of wisdom) who merges his self in the universal Self.

Who is qualified to glorify the Lord? He who regards himself as worthless, as lower than a blade of grass. He who has endurance like a tree, which will even give shade to the man who is cutting it down. And he who thinks he is not worthy of honor, but gives honor to the lowest of creation. A devotee must look upon himself as unworthy, as very lowly. Sitting at home in the midst of his family, a man may think himself a person of importance; but if he goes out and mingles with others, who are more important than he, his pride goes down. Still he may feel the importance of the city in which he lives; but when he learns how small Madras is compared to London, how small London is compared to the earth, and that the earth is nothing but a point in the astronomical heaven, his pride goes down lower and lower, until he realizes that compared to the Lord of the universe he is nothing. Nature abhors a vacuum. As the devotee, therefore, empties himself of himself, he is infilled with God. If he does any work, he feels that it is God who is doing it, not he. If he achieves any success, he believes that it is not his, but God's. "Not I, not I; but Thou, but Thou"—this is his paramount idea; and this is the true type of a *Sannyasin* (one who has dedicated himself wholly to God.)

The *Jnani* (or philosopher) is one who has found out another process. He realizes the hollowness, the nothingness of the world. He no longer identifies himself with the body, but he merges into God and ceases to exist as a separate entity. He attains this by discrimination. In Sanskrit we have the word *Ahamkar,* which means egoism or the sense of "I." To whom does this *aham* or "I" belong? Does it belong to me or to someone else? If I belong to myself, the *Jnani* says,

I could command myself. But is it a fact that I direct myself, or am I directed by a power outside myself? If I actually directed myself from my birth, I would direct myself to a palace, to a healthy body; yet I live in a hovel, perhaps, and have a weak body. Who does not want to claim a palace for his home? Who does not want to claim a king for his father? Who does not want the brain of a Newton? Yet all these things are denied to the man. If he could have chosen, he would have chosen the best of everything. Yet he has a father not to his taste, a wretched house to live in and poor food to eat. Perhaps he may long to study and he has not the money. Everything is against him. Has he then made his own choice? The answer is forced upon him that he has not been able to choose or he would have selected better. He would have chosen those things that would have made him happy.

Thus when we analyze this *aham* or "I-ness," we are forced to admit that nothing belongs to us. I cannot even claim this body as my own. We are here in the hands of an inscrutable Power which regulates all our actions. Hence we must give up all this egoism. Who am I? Is it a fact that I have no power against that Power? What is it that makes me subservient? I am hungry, so I must have to go to His creation for food. I am thirsty, so I must have to go to His creation for water. But, the *Jnani* asks, am I really hungry? Am I really thirsty? In what are hunger and thirst localized? Is it not true that when the body dies and no longer has hunger and thirst, I shall still live? So I am separate from the body. The body and I are distinct entities. The body is merely an instrument in my hands—like a telescope by which I may discover the stars, but which in itself is inert matter. So why should I think that what takes place in the body takes place in me? Where is all this desire localized? Hunger is in the

body; thirst is in the body. To keep the body alive we must sprinkle it with water as we do a plant. If we do not, it will drop down like a dry leaf. But "I" do not drop down.

The story is told that *Maya* (the personified creative force) came one day to a *Jnani* or Sage and said, "Am I not very great? See, I have created so many worlds and moons and stars. I am the ruler of such a vast universe." "You are queen of zero," the Sage replied. Angry at the lack of regard for her greatness, she touched him and he became a camel. He was put in the desert, made to carry heavy burdens over the hot sands and subjected to such cruel treatment that *Maya* herself at last had pity upon him and released him. Then she asked if he would not now fall down and worship her. He only laughed, saying: "I have neither camel's body nor mind. You are not hurting me. You are only slapping your own cheek." *Maya* exclaimed angrily: "You are still incorrigible!" Again she touched him and made him into an ass. As an ass he was beaten, forced to carry ill-smelling burdens and to live a miserable existence. Then once more *Maya* came to him and commanded him to bow down to her. "Why should I? I am not suffering. The ass's body belongs to you, not to me," he replied. At last *Maya,* seeing she could not disturb the serenity of his mind, fell prostrate before him, saying, "It is you who are the greater."

This is the true attitude of a *Jnani.* For him Self and body are two things, Self and mind are two things; and he understands that the affections of the body or the affections of the mind never touch him. Therefore he fears nothing—not even death. Why should he? Is he not perfect? Is he not infinite? He rather says, "Yes, Lord, all this you have given, now take it away." Thus renunciation becomes his ideal. He knows that he is neither body nor mind, and when he ceases to identify himself with both body and mind, he realizes his

infinite nature. Then he knows that he and God are one. Thus by giving up everything he has gained everything. For all belongs to God, and he and God are one.

But he does not get this outside himself, as a man takes money and goes to the bazaar to buy cloth or food. All these things are in him. Before he realized his true nature, he was like a man, who, although rich, yet goes from door to door begging food. His neighbors know that he is rich and look upon him as a hypochondriac or a madman; but even when they tell him that he has money, he still believes himself poor. So this madness is on us. We think that we are the body; that we need food to make us live, we need air to make us live. But when man properly analyzes himself, he finds that he actually wants nothing. He is self-sufficient. What is it that keeps us from knowing this? It is our egoism that keeps us from knowing what we are. Throw away egoism and we shall know that God and man are one.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say that if we thrust a stick in water, the water seems to be divided and we see a right-hand current and a left-hand current. But take the stick out; at once the water becomes one and right-hand and left-hand disappear. So we are one. What makes us believe that we are not? It is the stick of ego thrust into the water of our mind which makes us think there are two currents,—moral and immoral, good and bad, light and darkness, pleasure and pain. Take up the stick. Throw away the "I." If you can do it for one moment, then you will know what you are. This is what is called Realization or the state of super-consciousness. It is attained when the stick has been taken out and the current has become one. This is the goal of *Jnana* or the path of wisdom.

So both in *Jnana* and *Bhakti* a man will have to struggle against the "I." The *Bhakta* or devotee analyzes and finds that

the "I" does not belong to him. He plunges it into the infinite "I," so he loses his small egoism. He thinks: "I am smaller than the smallest, I am lower than the lowest. I am nothing." This is the method of the *Bhakta.* The *Jnani* says: "Mind, body, *koshas* (sheaths) do not belong to me. I am always one and the same. All these waves do not exist in me; they exist in something other than myself,—in matter or *Maya.*" So instead of bringing down this sense of "I," this self-consciousness to the level of the body and mind, he knows that it is self-existent. It is not to be identified with a man's physical nature. He defines the real ego in this way: "It is not a man, not a god, not a householder, not a *Sannyasin,* not rich, not poor; it is nameless and formless." Thus he discriminates about himself, and at last finds out that what he was identifying with body was all along spirit.

This can be done in only one way. The limited *aham* or ego which identifies itself with the body and mind is the greatest enemy of man. He must get rid of it. To do this there are two methods. The *Jnani* must select a man who has known his true nature and serve him humbly. Then his egoism will disappear. Sri Ramakrishna had given up all egoism; but still there remained the idea "I am a Brahmin." To destroy this he used to get up early in the morning, take a broom and go and cleanse the house of a Pariah. Through service alone one can get rid of egoism. But when a man wishes to serve without *Bhakti* or devotion, such dry *Jnana* will bring nothing. Egoism can only be got rid of through service with devotion. But so long as anyone is vain and thinks "I am learned, I am great," he cannot serve truly.

Whether we are *Jnanis* or *Bhaktas* we have one common enemy to fight against,—egoism. The *Bhakta* gets rid of it by thinking: "I am nothing, God is all." The *Jnani* gets rid of it by the process of *"Neti, neti,"* "I am not the body, not the

mind or the senses." But both must serve. We all serve here in some way, but we are paid for it by the hope of pleasure or gain. Will we serve as willingly for nothing? No. Yet this voluntary service we must have. Only so can we get rid of egoism; and only when egoism is destroyed can we realize God.

MORNING HYMN

Translated from the Bengalee.

Arise, O brother, arise! Remain no longer in slumber.
In the deep sleep of worldliness, hast thou lost all consciousness?
The night is ended. The sun, jewel of the day, has risen.
The sound of the Lord's Name fills the sky.
Standing at the gate, holding in His hand the nectar of His blessing,
Behold the Father of the Universe is calling to all His children.
Arise, O brother arise! Why dost thou not wake and take the sweet Name of the Lord?

NOTES ON KARMA YOGA

By Swami Saradananda.

Karma Yoga means the method of obtaining union with the Supreme or freedom by means of work. The Vedanta in its practical application is divided into four methods or Yogas. The end and aim of all four is the same, but Vedanta says that all men cannot attain this end by the same method. Some men have mystic tendencies; they must realize God by means of inner searching, by examining into the nature of the mind in all its workings. Others are of emotional tendencies and must adopt devotional methods; they must concretize their ideals in a Personal God. Others are philosophers pure and simple; to them the idea of dependence upon a Being outside of themselves does not appeal, and reason and sheer force of

will alone can help them. Lastly there are men who require activity in order to make progress and for them is the science of Karma Yoga.

Karma Yoga is mainly based on the law of Karma, the word here meaning the effect of work rather than the work itself. It says that a man's character and tendencies are determined by his past actions. If his deeds have been good, so will his character and desires be. If they have been evil, evil will be his tendencies. To remove the effect of past misdeeds, good deeds are the only remedy and Karma Yoga shows how to purify our activity to this end. It divides work into work *with* and work *without* motive. Work with motive, again, it divides into work done for name, fame, material benefit in this world or for reward in another world. The Vedanta tells us that we are what we have made ourselves; and if we work with any one of these motives, we shall be bound by that motive, bound by the law of cause and effect. Freedom is the end and aim of religion—freedom from the dualities (happiness and unhappiness); but to be rid of the effect (which is bondage) we must first remove the cause. As long as there is motive in work, that work is selfish and will keep us in bondage. We must remember what selfishness means. It is often urged against this Philosophy that it is essentially selfish in its teachings, in that it teaches the pursuit of its methods with the object always before us of freedom for the soul; but we must never lose sight of one most important factor: *This ego is not that Soul.* Therefore in releasing the Soul from bondage, we are to all intents and purposes working for others. We are working for the destruction of the ego in order that the reality (the Soul) which we do not at present know, may be freed from the prison house of the ego.

In order that work may be unselfish, it is absolutely essen-

tial that we be unattached. While we are working for another because we have feelings of particular regard for that other, there is motive in our work. We must fill ourselves with the feeling that we are one with the whole universe. Those who believe in God should see God in everything; and if we can get this idea, it will be impossible that we become attached in our work; in other words, our work will be motiveless and therefore not limited by cause and effect. Work as masters and not as servants. Care not for the results, for that also is a motive.

But to attain this end, we must understand clearly that the lower kinds of work are not to be despised. The majority of us are unable to work without motive and Karma Yoga teaches us to make that motive the highest our ideal sets before us,—to work for others rather than for ourselves, and constantly to increase the circle of those for whom we work until we embrace all and everything. Duty is not to be despised; we must, indeed, work and work in accordance with duty, but ever recognizing that duty is not the end; recognizing also—which is of great importance—that duty varies according to nationality and creed. The highest point of duty is reached when we recognize the truth and justice of the customs of those around us, among whom we are placed, and adapt ourselves to those customs, rather than try to make their customs subservient to our own preconceived notions of what customs and habits should be. As the Swami Vivekananda once said: "We should always try to see the duty of others through their own eyes, and never judge the customs of other races or other peoples by our standard." The only way to fulfil duty is to do that which comes to hand. The nature of the work is not the test, but the manner in which it is done. "To work you have the right, but not to the fruits thereof."

VILWAMANGAL THE SAINT

Fragment of Drama by Girish Chunder Ghosh.

(Rendered from the Bengalee especially for "The Message of the East.")

ACT I. Scene IV.

In a cremation-ground on the bank of the river.

(*Vilwamangal is a wealthy Brahmin youth, who has become infatuated with a beautiful dancing-girl, Chintamani, for whom he is squandering all his inheritance. Forced to remain at home to perform his father's funeral rites, he breaks away at evening time and in a terrible storm tries to cross the river to the house of Chintamani, with whom he had quarrelled in the morning.*)

(*Vilwamangal enters.*)

Vilwamangal.—I shall see. There is another ferry station four miles further on. Not even a fishing-dinghy here! Strange! Not a floating plank or log? Usually there are plenty strewn along the bank. Oh, what a downpour! I left her in anger and said I would not return. Probably Chintamani is standing watching for me in this rain. Alas, my beloved! We two are like two turtle-doves. But between us is this surging river. What is the light there beside that bush? Fire in the cremation-ground? Strange that the rain does not extinguish it. But this dreadful river does not stop to listen to anyone. Ah! my life is ebbing. What a frightful storm! My, what a crash of thunder! It is as if vampires were fighting. Life, I would count thee of small value, were it not that I could not then see Chintamani. Oh! What shall I do? Probably she too is suffering like this. But she is only a frail woman, what can she do? Otherwise she would come across the river and throwing her arms about my neck in tears would chide me. Chintamani is mine and I am Chintamani's. This life is Chintamani's; it does not belong to me, for she loves me. What shall I do? How can I cross? Such

angry waves! Perhaps I can find a log in the cremation-ground.

(*As he approaches, he sees Pagalini, a religious mendicant, who appears like a mad-woman.*)

Who is this? A vampire? Perhaps she has the power to take me across! My life is at stake anyway. (*Addressing Pagalini*) Listen! I shall worship you with great pomp, if you can take me across the river. Mother, mercifully speak to me. My heart is consumed with yearning for Chintamani!

Pagalini (*jumping up abruptly*).—Where, friend, where is Chintamani? (*This name is also used for the Supreme Lord*) Where is he gone? Having lost the jewel of my heart, I am mad. See! See! I have come to the cremation-ground, but he is not here. In mountain caves and in deep forests, seeking for him have I spent many days weeping. I have smeared my body with ash, yet the burning anguish of my heart is not soothed. I wander in empty space carrying a heavy weight in my breast. Where is he? I cannot find him. He is the moon of my heart. My one desire is to see him. What holds me back? Where, where is Chintamani?

Vilwamangal (*to himself*).—Who is this woman? Why is she calling for Chintamani? She is not a vampire, but she may be mad. (*Aloud*) Who is Chintamani to you?

Pagalini.—He is mine! He is mine! I am too shy to call him by name.

Vilwamangal.—Chintamani is the name of a woman.

(*Pagalini describes the wonder and beauty of the Creative Energy which manifests Itself now as man, now as woman, or again as that which is beyond all speech.*)

Vilwamangal.—My Chintamani! I have not yet been able to fathom her beauty. Indeed as I gaze upon her lovely face, I grow speechless. What shall I do? How shall I go? Chintamani! Chintamani! Alas! must I die of longing here on the brink of this river?

Pagalini.—Life does not go so easily. I have tried jumping into the water, but the water dried up. I have plunged into fire, but the fire went out. Alas! Where is he who has stolen my heart? Come, friend, we shall take different roads and again search for Chintamani. Mother! Mother! Where art Thou? Come, Mother, illumine this cremation-ground.

Vilwamangal.—Dense darkness! I cannot see my way. Is it true that life does not go easily? If life should end, then I could not see Chintamani again. O crashing thunder, I do not fear thee. O raging river, of thee I am not afraid, Body, little do I cling to thee! But my fear is that I shall not again see Chintamani. Else, O river, I would look upon thee as a small puddle in the hoof-print of a cow. Chintamani! I must go to Chintamani.

(*He jumps into the river.*)

ACT II.

Chintamani's house surrounded by a high wall.

Scene I.

(*The maid servant hears the sound of someone falling and calls in fright to her mistress, who comes and finds Vilwamangal lying on the ground groaning. They lift him and carry him to the house. Chintamani asks him how he climbed the wall and Vilwamangal replies that he found a rope hanging on it. Chintamani, not believing his words, wishes to see the rope.*)

Scene II.

Vilwamangal.—There! There is the rope.

Chintamani.—Where? Let me see. (*Approaching the wall, she cries out*) Oh my! It is a venomous snake!

Vilwamangal.—What? A venomous snake?

A beggar—My lady, listen! When a snake puts its head into its hole, no matter how hard you pull, you can never pull

it out. Don't be afraid. It's dead. The pulling killed it. (*To himself*) Ouf! If this man were a thief, he could have stolen a treasure from behind seven walls.

Maid-servant.—This is what I call real yearning. This is true love-madness.

Chintamani.—What! You climbed up by taking hold of this deadly serpent? Why are you gazing at me like that?

Vilwamangal.—I am just looking at you.

Chintamani.—Why are you looking at me?

Vilwamangal.—You are very beautiful.

Chintamani.—How did you come across the river?

Vilwamangal.—I jumped into the water, thinking I would swim across, but the storm was terrific. When I reached the middle, the waves strangled me, then a log floated by—

Chintamani.—But what is this odor about you?

Vilwamangal.—I have told you already, I do not know.

Chintamani.—You caught hold of that snake without the least hesitancy?

Vilwamangal.—Chintamani, evidently you have never given your life for love, else you would have known that life is very insignificant, you would have known that there is not any real difference between a rope and a snake.

Chintamani.—Are you mad?

Vilwamangal.—If you have not found that out yet, then surely you are not a lover. But you are very beautiful! Very beautiful!

Chintamani.—Why are you looking at me in that vacant way?

Vilwamangal.—I am seeing whether your words are true or false. Have you not found proof before that I am mad? At night when you sleep, I keep awake to gaze on your face. When you sigh, I see emptiness everywhere. When you shed

tears, arrows pierce my breast. From all this have you not known that I am mad? All my property is being sold for debt. I have not once turned to see it. Infamy I have made my garment. Does what I tell you seem truth to you? (*Pointing to the dead snake*) Behold here a visible proof that I am mad. True, Chintamani, I am mad. But you are beautiful, very beautiful.

Chintamani.—Why are you saying all this?

Vilwamangal.—I do not know. You must be very beautiful, otherwise why should I have worshipped you so long? I look at you and wonder whether you are a goddess or a demon. If you were a goddess, you would have understood the pain of my heart. Surely you must be a demon, but very beautiful, very beautiful.

Chintamani.—Come! Let us see the log you clutched in crossing.

Vilwamangal.—Still you doubt? Come then!

(*A group of people approach the river bank, singing a morning hymn.*)

Nothing availeth! Why cling to the dream?
Body and riches are shadows that seem.
Time will fly past thee, O, time will not stay,
Then what shall befall thee?
What of tomorrow when endeth today?
When wilt thou find it, the moment for thee?
Brother, desire is boundless for aye,
Let thy desiring vanish away.
Yet on let us journey, fulfilling the day.
No one is thine. To no one is aught.
When will thine eyes behold what is sought?
May each find his treasure; on Him let us call,
On Hari, the Lord, let us call.

SCENE III.

A rotting corpse by the river bank.

Vilwamangal.—True! All is *Maya* (delusion). I have not found anyone who is mine. She for whose sake I jumped into the water, even she is not mine. Is there anywhere anyone who is mine? Why not see?

Chintamani.—Ah! even now the river is frightful. Yet it is not one quarter so angry as it was. You dared jump into it? Where, where is the log?

Vilwamangal.—There.

Chintamani (*going nearer and seeing the body*).—What? This is a rotting dead body! I no longer doubt. You are truly mad. You have no aversion, no shame, no fear. You catch hold of a snake, taking it for a rope. You seize a dead body, believing it a log. Let me tell you! Once I heard a religious preacher and today it comes back to me. This mind of yours, instead of giving it to me, a fickle dancing-girl, had you given it to the Lord, you would have accomplished something. What more can I say to you? You came across the river holding on to a dead body! You climbed by clutching a snake! It makes me shudder to think of it. To me all this seems a made-up story. But if it is a story, I have never heard anything like it before.

Vilwamangal (*to himself, pointing to the body*).—This is the end. This human body floats on the water, or dogs and jackals devour it, or the fire of the cremation-ground turns it into smoke. This woman, this will also be her end. In this transitory world, to whom then have I given my life? For whose sake did I embrace that dead body? These terrible fetters which bind me to a shadow! Yonder dawn—that also is a shadow. False! false! All this is false. Today I see dense darkness everywhere. Whose am I? Who is mine? For whose sake do I endure the burning fire of life? I have

been wandering with vacant aims in this world of empty shadows. Where is anyone who is mine? Come and show thyself, if there is anyone, that I may soothe my burning breast by surrendering to thee my whole heart and mind? This hideous world of shadows, how can there be any trace of love here? Where is that ocean of love, into which the stream of my love can flow and lose itself? Tell me where thou art, who art mine? I long to see thee. I have not from my birth seen mine own. Where shall I go? Where shall I find thee? Amid darkness I have lost my way! Who will give me light? I will seek and find my own.

(*Pagalini enters singing.*)

He leads me by the hand where'er I go,
As my Companion, wanders to and fro.
No need to beg that One who loves me so!

Right tenderly He wipes my weary brow,
He looks into my face, His love I know;
And if I smile, He smiles, and if I grieve, He grieves,
O, tender care that all my want relieves!

And thus it is that He is known.
Who says there's none to call his own?
Seek, seek Him out, for True is He.—
Still His sweet words are soothing me.

(*Pagalini goes out.*)

Chintamani.—Ah! What a sweet singer!

Vilwamangal.—Is there really no one to call my own? There must be someone, somewhere! Only I am not able to see in the darkness. Yes, there is someone and he must be near me. Who kept me from sinking in the raging waters? Who saved my life from the deadly serpent's sting? Who said that I had none in the world to call my own? Who tells me now, "I am thine"? Who art thou? What is thy form?

Thou must be very beautiful! Appear! Talk to me. Soothe my heart. Yes, thou art really near; only I am blind. I cannot see thee. Who will give me sight? Whither shall I go?

(*Vilwamangal goes out.*)

(To be Continued)

REPORTS

The special course of lectures on "Great Teachers of the World" given by the Swami Paramananda at the Vedanta Centre of Boston during December brought the largest attendance yet seen at the Sunday Service. The new Chapel was filled to the doors, and so many and urgent were the requests to have the lectures put into permanent form that it has been decided to print them in the pages of the "Message" during the coming year. The keynote of all the Swami's teaching is tolerance, harmony, sympathy, and this note sounded through every lecture with such power of conviction that it seemed to break down every barrier and reveal the absolute oneness of Truth, differently clothed though it might be by Sri Krishna, Zoroaster, Buddha and Christ. Everywhere he sought to show the unity of fundamental principles under the diversity of outer form, forcing his hearers to realize with vivid clearness that to him who penetrates below the surface of religion intolerance is impossible. He also earnestly appealed to them not to let sectarian or race prejudice cheat them of the many priceless lessons to be learned from the life and words of every great teacher, whatever the place or time or form of his Divine Message.

The Centre held its usual Christmas Service on Thursday evening, Dec. 24th. The Chapel and Library were decorated with wreaths and flowers and the service consisted of music, meditation and an address by the Swami.

The steadily increasing attendance at the special Monday class as well as at all the classes has determined the Swami to make no change in the programme of work for the present. All meetings will remain the same. The Centre will celebrate its sixth anniversary on the 5th of January and a report of the year's work will appear in the next number of the "Message."

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VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

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Seventh Season—1915

SUNDAY, 11 A. M.

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February	*7th*	*Religious Influence of the East.*
"	*14th*	*Reincarnation and Evolution.*
"	*21st*	*What is Self-Knowledge.*
"	*28th*	*Tranquillity of Body and Mind.*
March	*7th*	*Universal Ideal of Religion.*
"	*14th*	*Life after Death.*
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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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As long as we move with the waves of circumstances, as long as we are influenced by the changes of life, we cannot find peace. But he who is not affected by these changes, he attains a blissful state that is more than happiness. If he feels pain or if he feels pleasure, he recognizes that they come from the Supreme Source, and the consciousness that there is nothing apart from that one Source takes away all the weight of suffering. He knows that no real evil can come from that One, who is his true Mother, his true Father, his true Friend and Protector, so he has no need to fear, and he remains always serene and cheerful. The touch of that philosopher's stone turns every pain and sorrow into blessing. In order to gain this consciousness, however, we must be constantly mindful of God and never fail to remember that our work and our life are for the fulfillment of His Divine purpose alone. This consciousness sweetens our whole being. The moment we are cut off from that Source, we feel darkness. Pleasure may give us a fleeting satisfaction; but we shall never have permanent satisfaction, until we experience what Christ calls "communion with the Father." There is One only who can give us lasting Happiness. The moment we realize union with That, darkness and misery will vanish forever. "When the Seer beholds Him, all the knots of the heart are cut asunder, all doubts are destroyed, the fetters of ignorance are broken, and he attains Supreme Bliss."

LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SRI KRISHNA

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

There are certain stages in human evolution when the clouds of ignorance thicken, when the weak are oppressed by the strong, righteousness is overpowered by unrighteousness, and the intoxication of material ambition maddens the world; then nothing short of a direct manifestation of Divine Energy can rend the cloud and re-establish Truth, Justice and Peace. Therefore it is promised in the Sacred Scriptures that whenever there is a decline of virtue and a predominance of vice, God will come in human form to protect the good, to destroy all evil influences and restore true religion. Whether the Infinite Spirit can be embodied in human form, it is not possible for the ordinary mind of man to comprehend; for the mysteries of the Divine realm can only be fathomed by the mind which has risen to the heights of spiritual illumination. Until, therefore, we have reached those heights, we must be very cautious not to be carried away by fanatical enthusiasm for what we call our creed, our Scripture, our Saviour; or to reject through narrowness everything which exists beyond the border of our vision. This lesson of breadth and tolerance we can perhaps learn from the Vedanta; for it never claims that one idea, one point of view, can satisfy the endless number of human beings, who vary so widely in their tendencies, ideals and spiritual development. For the same reason they recognize that it is not possible for one Messiah to appeal to all humanity. It must also be remembered that no one form can represent the whole of the Absolute. God is Infinite; hence there can be no limit to the number of His Manifestations. The different Divine Incarnations are like so many mighty branches stretching from the same Eternal Tree of the Absolute, giving shelter to the down-trodden and weary. If we bear this in mind, it may aid us to understand the lives and

teachings of the Great Ones.

When Sri Krishna appeared in India, sore need was felt for a Saviour. A tyrant king, named Kamsa, ruled in Mathura, and by his cruel deeds and evil life had created terror and misery throughout his kingdom. But although the king was merciless and inhuman towards all others, he had a deep love for his sister, Devaki, who was betrothed to one of his favorite nobles, Vasudeva. On their wedding-day, to do them special honor, he himself in all his royal splendor chose to act as charioteer and drive them to Vasudeva's house. But as they rode, a celestial voice was heard, saying: "O foolish Monarch! Whom art thou driving so happily? Knowest thou not that the eighth child of this marriage will be the cause of thy destruction?" When Kamsa heard this, his fondness for Devaki turned into bitter hatred and he angrily drew his sword to slay her; but Vasudeva, falling at the king's feet, implored him to spare the life of his innocent wife, promising that, if he did so, every child at its birth should be given over to him. Kamsa, satisfied with this, consented.

Although the joy of the newly-wedded couple was thus darkened by this sudden, tragic event, yet, being pious and full of faith, they surrendered themselves entirely to the Supreme, content to abide by His will whatever it might be. They lived quietly at Gokula until their first child was born. This Vasudeva, true to his promise, carried to the king, who destroyed it with his own hands; and so was it with the five children who followed. Only the seventh, by a strange miracle, escaped. And now the time had come when Devaki was to give birth to her eighth child, who, according to the dreaded prophecy, was to deliver the people from their oppression. Kamsa, to assure his own protection, threw Devaki and Vasudeva into the dungeons beneath his palace and placed trusted guards to watch them. At last the moment arrived.

A frightful storm raged without. The wind howled, the rain fell in floods, and the waters of the river Jamuna overflowed their banks. In the depths of night, when all creatures lay in deep slumber, save the heavy-hearted Devaki and Vasudeva, Krishna, the Holy Child, was born. As we read in the lives of all Saviours, certain supernatural happenings took place. It is said that the entire dungeon was flooded with effulgent light, radiating from the Babe, and the air was filled with the songs of celestial beings. Unspeakable joy welled up in the hearts of Vasudeva and Devaki and made them forget the prison and all its perils. For the moment they saw only the beauty and glory of their new-born Son. Then, remembering what awaited Him, they burst into tears and implored in agony of mind the Supreme Protector to rescue their Child from the cruel hands of the royal persecutor. In answer came a voice, saying: "Weep no more. Your days of sorrow are ended. He who has been born of you will save the world from misery. Arise, O Vasudeva! Carry the young child to the house of Nanda and exchange it for the new-born daughter there." But how? The gate was locked, iron bars blocked the way, sentinels kept watch at every turn. How could they escape? It seemed impossible. Yet the godly and trusting Vasudeva set forth without question. The chains dropped from his ankles, the gates of the prison fell back, the guards slept, even the waters of the river parted to make way; and Vasudeva did as he was bidden.

When, next day, the news was brought to the king that the child born in the dungeon was a girl, he laughed at the folly of the prophecy. Yet the fear in his wicked heart would not let him rest and, going to the prison, he demanded the new-born baby. Despite the pitiful supplications of Vasudeva and Devaki, Kamsa seized it angrily and lifted it to dash it against a rock; but as he did so, the little figure

slipped from his hand and appeared in the sky as a radiant goddess, proclaiming, "He who will destroy thee is even now living in Gokula on the banks of the Jamuna." At this Kamsa's rage was rekindled and he sent forth a decree to slay all newborn children. This reminds us forcibly of the slaughter of children ordered by King Herod, and has led many zealous Christians to interpret the life and teaching of Krishna as an imitation of Christ's life and teaching. But how can we believe this when Krishna came many centuries before the Christian era, as even some of the best Western scholars affirm? Sir William Jones, the great Orientalist, writes: "That the name of Christna (Krishna) and the general outline of his history were known in India long anterior to the birth of our Saviour and probably to the time of Homer (900 B. C.), we know very certainly." And Godfrey Higgins says, "The sculptures on the walls of the most ancient temples—temples by no one ever doubted to be long anterior to the Christian era—as well as written works equally old, prove beyond the possibility of doubt the superior antiquity of the history of Krishna to that of Jesus." Davis, Colebrook and Brennard fix the date of His life at about 1391 B. C., while the most authoritative Hindu scholars make it half a century earlier, in 1430 B. C. This again has led another class of men to conclude that Christ's life is merely an imitation of Krishna's. But is it necessary for us to accept either of these points of view? History repeats itself, human needs also repeat themselves, and according to such needs and circumstances Divine Incarnations come.

Great rejoicing was felt in the house of the Shepherd King, Nanda, on the following morning, when it was discovered that the baby born in the night was not, as they supposed, a girl, but a boy. As the news spread abroad, hundreds came with offerings to congratulate the happy parents

and pay homage to the new-born Child. Among the number were some wise men who had beeen looking for the advent of the Lord, and who, recognizing on Krishna the marks of an Avatara (Divine Incarnation), offered Him their joyful worship and proclaimed His future glory. Kamsa, hearing all this, sent many evil-minded emissaries to destroy the Child, but all his efforts were defeated by the superhuman power of Sri Krishna Himself. So the Child grew, captivating the hearts of all who saw Him by His beauty and bewitching smile. One day, it is told, a fruit-vender came to the house and Krishna, seeing the beautiful fruits, ran with His little hands full of rice to buy them. What He offered was not sufficient to pay for even one fruit, but the woman was so charmed by His loveliness that she gave him all the best fruits in her basket. Sri Krishna ran away laughing with joy, while the woman, turning to rearrange her basket, found that each grain of rice had turned into gold.

The many attempts made on the life of their Son kept Nanda and Yasodha, his wife, very anxious, and they finally decided to move to a place on the bank of the Jamuna more distant from Kamsa's dominion. They chose the beautiful spot of Vrindavana. Here Krishna's older brother, Balarama, joined Him, and under his protection He was allowed to go with the cowherd boys and girls to the fields to tend the cattle. Indian literature is full of poetic descriptions of this period,—of how Sri Krishna, by His Divine sweetness, won the hearts of all His companions; how, through the long day, they played together in the meadows, dancing or chasing one another in and out among the cows and sheep; or sat in the cool shade listening to their beloved Krishna play His flute. At such moments, it is said, all nature grew still, the cattle drew near, the lotuses on the river opened, and even the river itself bent out of its course to approach Him.

Among the band of joyous cowherds who surrounded Him, one more than all others understood His Divine nature and gave Him unfailing love and worship. This was Radha, the most blessed among the Gopies, whose pure love typifies the ideal yearning of the individual soul for the Supreme.

In the meantime, Kamsa, realizing that his enemies were growing to manhood in spite of all his attempts to destroy them, planned a great tournament and invited Krishna and Balarama to take part in it, hoping to see them killed before his eyes. The two youths were driven to Mathura in a royal chariot. People hailed them with delight and offered them kingly honors. A simple hunch-backed woman, it is told, recognizing their superhuman nature, reverently begged to annoint their bodies with sandalwood paste and to hang fragrant garlands about their necks. As she did so, Sri Krishna touched her and immediately she was cured of her deformity.

At the appointed time of the tournament Krishna and Balarama, attired as princes, presented themselves in the arena; but despite all the King's secret and evil designs, they remained unharmed, while Kamsa and his followers were vanquished. Then Sri Krishna, releasing Ugrasena, Kamsa's aged father, from the long imprisonment imposed by his treacherous son, placed him on the throne. Thus the deliverance of the people was accomplished.

With this a new chapter of Sri Krishna's life begins. Nanda and the cowherds returned alone to Vrindavana; while the brothers, after a time of rejoicing with their parents and kinsfolk, were sent to the great sage Sandipani at Benares to receive an education befitting princes. There they led the simple, austere life of *Brahmacharins* (students), going with the other boys to gather fire-wood in the forest and bring water from the river for the service

of their teacher. It is said that in a few months the two lads, through their extraordinary intelligence, mastered all that the sage could teach them. Then, wishing to offer some return for their master's loving care, they begged the privilege of making him a special gift. The sage's wife, being aware of the superhuman nature of their pupils, asked Krishna for the restoration of their dead son and He granted her desire.

Sri Krishna now becomes a very prominent figure in India. Wherever there was conflict or disorder or injustice He was called as a mediator; for He was known throughout the country as the wisest and most learned, the greatest of statesmen, the most righteous of warriors and above all, justice itself. It is thus that we find Him seeking to bring about peace between the two great ruling families of India, the Kauravas and Pandavas, whose strifes are recorded in the great ancient Indian Epic, the Mahabharata. A cousin of the five Pandavas, Duryodhana, arrogant, ambitious and jealous of the nobility and power of his kinsmen, had, through treachery, usurped the throne and exiled his cousins, who, returning at the close of the term of their exile, asked back, not their kingdom, but merely one village for each brother. Sri Krishna, friendly to both sides and eager to maintain peace, went in person to the court of Duryodhana to make an appeal for justice. "That friend," He declared, "the wise do not consider a friend, who uses not every effort in a rupture between kinsmen. Having heard my beneficial counsel, consistent with virtue and profit, if the foolish Duryodhana will not accept it, he will only be subdued by his own fate, if, without sacrificing the rightful interest of the Pandava brothers, I can secure the peace of the Kurus, I shall have discharged a sacred duty." Then going to the audience chamber of the king, Sri

Krishna plead thus with Duryodhana and his counsellors:

"Hear, O Duryodhana, the words that I speak particularly for the good of thyself and thy posterity. Born as thou art in a family distinguished for wisdom, thyself endued with learning and morals, do this word of mine, my good friend. Virtue ever characterizes the conduct of the good in this world and that of evil-minded men is always seen to be the contrary. But more than once has such perverted course of action been pursued by thee, the consequence whereof is terrible unrighteousness tending to bring dire destruction of life. Such an evil is never to be wished for, but it would be irresistibly brought about by thee without a cause. Avoiding it, thou shalt do what is good to thyself, thy brothers, thy dependents and thy friends, and thou shalt be saved from an ignominious and sinful deed. Make peace, prince of the Bharata race, with the wise, brave, and powerful Pandavas, great in learning and self-subjugation. From peace will proceed happiness to kinsmen and friends, aye, my dear, to the whole world.

"From birth, my dear, thy kinsmen (the Pandavas) have been treacherously treated by thee; and they, of unsullied reputation, have always behaved toward thee generously. It behooves thee to treat with equal generosity thine own principal kindred; be not the slave of passion. The activity of the wise is directed towards the triad: virtue, wealth, and pleasure; and when all these are not attainable, they aim at virtue and wealth. When the three are set apart from each other, the wise men pursue virtue; the middling man wealth, the cause of strife; and the fool pursues pleasure alone. That man perishes, the uncontrolled, who tempted by his senses, abandons virtue, desiring to secure profit and pleasure by improper means. Virtue alone should he from the outset practise who desires

pleasure and profit, for never does true profit or true pleasure deviate from virtue. Virtue alone they declare to be the means of obtaining the three, and he who by virtue desires to acquire them, doth forthwith flourish like the flame in the forest. Prince of the Bharatas, my dear, it is by unlawful means that thou desirest to obtain the great and glorious sovereignty extending over all the kings. Himself does he hew down, as forest with an axe, who returns deceitful for right behaviour. The self-subjugated man should not despise the commonest creature in the three worlds, far less those princes of Pandu's race. The man who is enslaved by passion loses all discernment.

"Set not thy heart upon war. What is the good of causing a general slaughter of men? Look to that single man (Arjuna) who being vanquished, victory will be thine. Look at thy sons and brothers, kinsmen and relations; let not these descendants of the race of Bharata perish on thy account. Thee will those great warriors (the Pandavas) install as the Yuvaraja (the Reigning Prince) and they father Dhritarashtra, Lord of men, as the Emperor. Despise not, my dear, Fortune rising ready to embrace thee. Having made peace with the Pandavas and followed the counsel of thy well-wishers, living in love with thy friends, thou shalt ever enjoy all blessings."

Despite this eloquent and loving appeal, Duryodhana remained unmoved and replied that he would not cede to his cousins as much land as could be held on a needle's point. We often find this arrogant attitude among men who, through ignorance and vanity, are nearing their downfall. They regard their own ego, their own power, their own armies as invincible and the only things to be depended upon. It is this which causes the destruction of great empires.

All efforts at peace having failed, war became inevitable and the leaders on both sides set out to gain the support of the various ruling princes of India. Even Duryodhana, recognizing Sri Krishna's superhuman power, was eager to secure His aid and hurried to His palace. Krishna was sleeping at the time and Duryodhana, impatient to have the first audience, entered His room and seated himself on a throne by His head. Soon Arjuna came and took his place humbly at the Lord's feet. Sri Krishna on waking naturally saw Arjuna first and therefore gave to him the prior choice, although Duryodhana, as the first to arrive, loudly claimed it for himself. Sri Krishna, desiring to satisfy both, offered these alternatives: a strong army of well-trained soldiers on the one hand, and on the other Himself, unarmed and unwilling to fight. Arjuna quickly chose the second, as Sri Krishna knew he would; and Duryodhana went away overjoyed at having gained what he most coveted. So the Lord satisfied the hearts of both.

At last the armies were drawn up on the field of Kurukshetra. All the foremost warriors of India had gathered there to aid one side or the other. Sri Krishna now appears as the charioteer of Arjuna, the greatest general of the Pandavas. Arjuna addresses him thus, as we read in the Bhagavad-Gita: "O changeless Krishna, place my chariot between the two armies, so that I may see with whom I have to fight. For I desire to observe those who are assembled here for battle." Then seeing all his kinsmen, his friends and teachers in the opposing ranks, Arjuna, overwhelmed with grief and deep compassion, cries out: "My limbs fail me, my mouth is parched, my body shivers, my bow slips from my hand. I am unable to stand upright, my mind is in a whirl. I see no good in slaying my own people in this strife. I desire neither victory, nor

kingdom, nor pleasure. These warriors I do not wish to kill, even though I am killed by them, not even for dominion over the three worlds, how much less for the sake of this earth." Thus lamenting, Arjuna sinks down on the seat of his war-chariot, and dropping his bow, declares, "I shall not fight."

The Blessed Lord then calls to his faltering disciple: "O Arjuna, whence comes upon thee in this critical moment this depression unworthy of an Aryan? Yield not to unmanliness; it does not befit thee. Casting off this mean faint-heartedness, arise, O terror of thy foes." Then the Lord standing on the battle-field, gives instruction not merely regarding the impending war, but in regard to the greater war of human life—how to subdue the passions, the worst enemies of man, how to overcome ignorance, how to rise above fear and depression, how to gain the vision of the Supreme. There in the midst of two vast armies on the eve of battle, the highest problems of philosophy are discussed and the disciple is shown that as a warrior it is his duty to defend a righteous cause, and rising above all personal considerations, to fight bravely, "regarding alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat." "To work alone thou hast the right, but never to the fruits thereof. Be thou neither actuated by the fruits of action nor take thou to inaction. Being unattached, perform thy duties unceasingly, for by the performance of action unattached, one attains the highest." Thus the Lord instructed Arjuna. When man can apply this in his everyday life, he at once feels freedom from all slavery or drudgery. This is the secret of work. Work for work's sake, love for love's sake! To work without any ulterior motive, to love for the sake of loving without looking for any return—such is the lofty ideal set forth by Sri Krishna.

The Lord then reminds Arjuna of the undying nature of his real Self. "He who considers this (the soul) as a slayer, or he who thinks that this is slain, neither of these knows the Truth, for it does not slay nor is it slain. It is never destroyed even when the body is destroyed. These bodies are perishable, but the dwellers in these bodies are eternal and indestructible. As man casts off worn-out garments and puts on others which are new, similarly the embodied soul, casting off worn-out bodies, takes others which are new. Sword cannot pierce it (the soul), fire cannot burn it, water cannot wet it, air cannot dry it. It is eternal, all-pervading, unchangeable, immovable and everlasting." Since, then, in the heart of every living being there dwells this mighty and immortal soul, "Let a man raise himself by his (Divine) Self, let him never sink down in despair; for he alone is his own friend and he alone is his own enemy. He who has conquered himself by his higher Self, he is the friend of himself; but he whose self is unconquered, his own self acts as his enemy like an external foe." But, the disciple asks, how can this Immortal Self be realized? Then the Lord explains the different paths of Yoga, through which man may attain union with the Supreme. "Alike am I to all beings; hated or beloved there is none to Me. But those who worship Me with devotion, they are in Me and I am in them. Even if the most wicked worships Me with undivided love, he should be regarded as good, for he is rightly resolved. Quickly he becomes a righteous soul and attains eternal peace. Know thou that My devotees never perish."

Arjuna, now thoroughly roused from his grief and lethargy, thus addresses the Lord: "The supremely profound word regarding Self-knowledge, spoken by Thee out of compassion for me, has dispelled my delusion. O Su-

preme Being I desire to see Thy Godly Form. If Thou thinkest me worthy, show me Thine Infinite Self." Then Divine sight is given the disciple and he perceives the One in many, the Undying in the midst of the dying. He beholds all things rising and setting in that One Absolute Source and all creatures abiding in That, being merely instruments in His mighty hand. Arjuna, gazing at the wondrous vision, exclaims "Thou art the Primeval Deity, the Ancient Being; Thou art the Supreme Refuge of this universe; Thou art the Knower and That to be known, the Supreme Abode; by Thee alone is this universe pervaded. Infinite in power and immeasurable in glory, Thou pervadest all, therefore Thou art All. Thou art the Father of the moving and unmoving world; the object of its worship. Incomparable Power, no one in the three worlds exists equal to Thee. How, then, can anyone excel Thee? Prostrating my body in adoration, I beg thy forgiveness. O adorable Lord, as a father forgives his son, a friend a dear friend, a beloved one his love, even so do Thou forgive me." The sudden realization of Sri Krishna's Godly nature dazzles Arjuna; and, overwhelmed by the thought that he had treated the Lord as a mere friend and companion, he humbly implores His forgiveness. Such humility always comes as the result of true revelation, when we perceive the real nature of God. When we feel His guiding hand and know that He is the real Doer, then we no longer hesitate to surrender ourselves to Him. Thus the ego is conquered when man attains the vision of the Supreme.

This is the key-note of the teaching of Sri Krishna as given in the Bhagavad-Gita; and it has lived through the ages, inspiring many, many souls. Why should not Truth live forever? It does live forever; and whether It is given in the East or the West, It must continue to live and reach

countless numbers. This wonderful Scripture stands unparalleled in many respects and should be studied not only by those who are striving for spiritual attainment, but also by those who are trying to perform their duties in the world; for in it all the problems of human life are taken up and solved. Though this teaching was given ages ago, it comes forth as a living message today to help us learn how to fight the battle of life; for Arjuna represents the human soul seeking for guidance from the Supreme Source. So are we all disciples. We are all in need of Higher guidance and Lord Krishna stands as a Divine Light pointing the way, that we may have Wisdom to follow the true path and thus fulfill the most sacred mission of our life.

HYMN TO THE DIVINE MOTHER

Composed in Sanskrit by Swami Vivekananda.

O, Thou most beautiful, whose holy hands
Hold pleasure and hold pain! Doer of good,
Who art Thou?—The water of existence
By Thee is whirled and tossed in mighty waves.
Is it, O Mother, to restore again
This universe's broken harmony
That Thou, without cessation, art at work?

O, may the Mother of the universe,—
In whose activity no respite rests,
Incessantly distributing the fruits
Of action done, guiding unceasingly
All action yet to come,—bestow Her boon
Of blessing on me, Her child, for evermore.
I realize, I know that it is Thou
Who holdest in Thy hands dread Karma's strands.

Be it inherent Nature, uncreate,
Or Destiny, some unforseen First Cause,
(Which lacking, nothing is accounted for)
Whose chain of Will, untrammeled, guides earth's laws,
May She, the primal Guide, my shelter be!

Manifestations of Her glory show
In powers of immeasurable might,
Throughout the universe, powers that swell
The sea of birth and death, forces that change
And break up the unchanged and change again.
Lo, where shall we seek refuge save in Her?

Alike to friend and foe Thy lotus-eyes;
Ever Thine animating touch brings fruit
To fortunate and unfortunate alike;
The shade of death and immortality,
Both these, O Mother, are Thy grace supreme.
Mother Supreme, O, may Thy gracious face
Never be turned away from me, Thy child!

What art Thou? Mother. All. How praise Thee then?
My understanding is so little worth
Presumptuous 'twere to seize with hands of mine
The sole Supporter of the universe!
So at Thy blessed feet,—contemplated
By all that embrace the Good and the abode
Of fearlessness, worshipped by service true,—
There at Thy blessed feet, I refuge take.

She, who since birth, hath ever led me on
Through paths of trouble to perfection's goal,
Mother-wise, in Her own sweet, playful ways,
She, who has always through my life inspired
My understanding, She, my Mother, She,
The All is my resort, whether my work
O'erflow with full fruition, or bear none.

STEPS TO REALIZATION

If a man wishes to climb to the top of a tree he has to begin from the bottom, where the branches are within his grasp. When he is once off the ground and up in the tree, he may from one point of view be said to have become one with it. After he reaches the top, he may be regarded as above it, for there is no longer anything beyond his reach. Similar is the realization of the One through the ever-changing phenomena of the universe. We all believe in a God, Who is Omnipotent and Omniscient, the Father and Sustainer of all. At first we are naturally led to see Him objectively, outside and far off. Then we draw nearer to Him and, recognizing His omnipresence, begin to live and move in Him. Finally we become lost in Him and realize that we and He are one. This is the essence of the teaching of the ancient Vedic Seers.

The Vedas furnish us with a complete scheme, by which we are carried through all these stages until we realize our own innate, universal, Divine Nature. In the *Samhitas*, aspect after aspect, power after power, attribute after attribute of deity is taken up and lifted to the conception of an Infinite Being or Power in Whom the whole universe exists, Who penetrates every mind and rules over all. To reduce everything to one ultimate infinite Being, however, does not answer all questions. Logic requires that that One should explain the existence of the universe with all its differences. So the next questions asked are: Whence came the universe? How does it exist? The answer is naturally sought at first on the outside. Every external object is questioned; and it is found that all are transient and misleading, that the one thing to be realized through them is the *Atman* or true Self inside, the Supreme Ruler and Worker of all. The real nature of the questioner and his relations to the Lord are the next problems which rise. The outside world of moving forms failed

to yield any answer to the Vedic Sages here, so they fell back on the inner world for a solution of these final truths; and they discovered that the persisting individual self inside and behind all the phenomena of life can be grasped only in the mind.

The whole process of turning from the external world to the internal and realizing the universal oneness there is as scientific as it is logical. The history of science is a record of the struggle to find one substance, of which matter and force are the manifestations. Gross matter is examined and reduced to a limited number of elements; but it is observed that no kind of matter can undergo change without the aid of some force. At once the search shifts from matter to force. But force is also found to change continuously; unlike matter, however, it is changeable substantially from one state to another. It is therefore easier to conceive a universal, infinite force, of which all others are manifestations. In this way scientists are able to postulate a possible theoretical solution to the problem of ultimate existence. As no force which in infinite and indivisible can ever exist divided, its apparent commensurability must be due to the limiting mass; and the true nature of a force, which appears limited, can therefore be understood by removing the limiting conditions of matter. The more we reduce the mass of matter having momentum, the more the force acting through it assumes infinite proportions. Thus the whole may be said to exist in every part. It is, however, physically impossible to reduce a mass to nothingness; it is also physically impossible to perceive absolute force apart from some modification of matter. We can therefore arrive only at a theoretical conception of a universal force, by a process of analogy and reasoning. Hence by no external or physical means can we reach the Ultimate.

A *Jiva* or individual soul is an organic monad with mo-

mentum. It is composed of a body element evolved out of what Vedanta calls *Akasa* (universal substance), and an energizing element evolved out of what is known as *Prana* (universal life-force). Both of these change, being sometimes manifested, sometimes unmanifested; they cannot therefore be permanent in nature. There must be a subtler, unchangeable substratum of Ultimate Energy behind all the changing forms of body and individual life-force, out of which these evolve and in which these changes take place. This is what is known as the essence of every being. This essence or *Atman* is not manufactured out of either *Akasa* or *Prana*. It is immaterial and self-existent and therefore will remain forever the same, however its limiting conditions may vary. Freedom—freedom from limitation and all worldly struggle is its nature and the recovery of this freedom is the purpose of its existence.

The whole universe, composed of myriads of *Jivas* (individual souls) could never exist, however, without a unifying factor, without an eternal Spiritual Centre towards which to converge. This Centre or God, so the dualists say, is the Supreme Ruler. He is omniscient, formless and free; also He is everywhere, working through nature day and night. The three separate existences, Nature, soul and God, are like three parallel lines running eternally side by side; of these, however, Nature and soul are the subordinate factors, wholly dependent on the will of God. But this cannot be, the qualified non-dualists say. There cannot be more than one infinite. If God is infinite, the individual soul and Nature cannot be apart from Him. They form, as it were, His infinite body; while He, as the Inner Soul of the Universe, interpenetrates both. Nature and Soul change—Nature in form and state, soul by the contraction and expansion of knowledge—but God remains unchangeable. Thus the dualist conceives

of the universe as a large machine set in motion and kept going by God; while the qualified non-dualist sees it as an organism interpenetrated by the Divine Self.

The monist says God is all there is. He is both the efficient and material cause of the universe. And since He is eternally changeless, the change in the universe is only a false perception. Our soul is not merely of the nature of God, but one with Him; and when we realize that we are in reality one with the Infinite Essence, all conception of separateness, of relative existence, of name and form, vanishes. So long as the one real Sun is not seen, its many reflections in water are mistaken for real suns. But when the real Sun is seen, the reflections cease to seem real. All our miseries are due to our ignorance of our true nature, to our identifying ourselves with the changing universe. When we realize that we are inseparable from the highest Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, then we enjoy perfect freedom.

This state of the monist is difficult for all to attain. Before it can be reached, some monists say, a man will have to pass through the two other stages. The first stage, according to this view, appeals to the senses, which are the instruments of external perception, and is easiest to grasp. The next stage is intellectual and a little higher; and God is perceived internally, within one's self. The last stage is spiritual, and everywhere, internally and externally, the same spirit is realized. Thus we see that God, Who in the first stage is the Creator and Ruler of the universe, becomes in the second the omnipresent inner Ruler and Controller of all. When again He is realized within one's self, the dream of a changing universe vanishes and there remains only the One Absolute Being. First we see God far beyond; next we come nearer to Him, we live in Him, enjoy Him and partake of His qualities; and finally we find that we are actually one with Him.

These are the three successive steps to realization, each of which marks a necessary stage in man's journey Godward.—*Adapted from the Brahmavadin.*

REPORTS

The Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated its sixth Anniversary on the evening of January 5th. The Chapel was decorated with garlands and a profusion of flowers sent by friends and nearly one hundred guests gathered to hear of the year's work and take part in the informal reception that followed. Swami Paramananda, in opening the exercises, said in brief: "As the Centre enters upon its seventh year, we ask God's Grace, as well as the good will of all friends, that it may continue to grow and bring blessing to many. The purpose of this work, as you know, is not to offer a substitute for existing faiths or to foster any spirit of rivalry towards them, but to lend a friendly helping hand to all who earnestly seek after Truth. In accordance with the Vedic Teaching, which we represent, God is One without a Second; He is Infinite, and although there may be many paths, many methods, many forms of religion leading to Him, yet they all express the same Spirit fundamentally. Therefore our object is not to ask anyone to give up his or her own religion, but to aid those who are striving along every path to realize the Presence of God and to gain strength and inspiration to live bravely in the face of the many difficulties which confront them in this battle of life. We do not call upon anyone to abandon his faith, but to uphold tolerance, universal sympathy and brotherhood, which have been often preached but not always practised. We are living in a time of growth, when the religious ideal as well as all ideals must be expanded, and Vedanta stands here to share with the West the

wealth of spiritual consciousness which India has accumulated through the ages."

The Swami then called for a review of the year's work, which was given by one of the members as follows: "As this is the first Anniversary celebrated in the new home, and there are many new friends present, it will, I am sure, be of interest to you all to hear something of the inception and early activities of the Centre. It was in the Spring of 1907 that Swami Paramananda paid a first short visit to Boston and gave several informal Talks at the house of a friend. He came again during the Christmas holidays of 1908. The earnest requests made on both these occasions to open a Centre in Boston determined him to remain here for a time at least. At the outset of January a lady, previously interested in the teaching, invited him to speak at her house, and asked a number of her friends to hear him. Much to her surprise fully forty responded to her hurried invitation. The outcome of this Talk was the organization of two classes. Other classes were soon after formed in Waltham, Chestnut Hill, Cambridge, and later on in Milton. The Swami also received invitations to lecture before a number of Clubs and Societies in the City and surrounding towns. This fully convinced him that there were many here eager for the help and inspiration which Vedanta could bring, and he decided to continue through the winter. But he realized that through private classes it would be impossible to reach the general public, so he secured a hall and began a course of free lectures. Very soon this hall was outgrown. At the close of this first course a meeting was called by those most interested and the suggestion made that a definite group be formed to assure the maintenance of the work, two of the number volunteering to serve as secretary and treasurer. A larger

hall was hired in the New Century Building, together with a class-room where the literature was put on sale.

"Through the summer the Swami continued some teaching of an informal nature at various places. He also gave a first course of lectures at the Greenacre Summer Conference and in the autumn he began a new series of lectures in Boston. These were interrupted by his departure for Washington, where he remained until April. On his return to Boston, excellent quarters for the work were secured at 16 St. Botolph Street and the Centre, now well established, entered on a new period of usefulness. The four years of steadily increasing activity spent there prepared the way for the permanent home which it now occupies. The dedication of this home last May marked the most important step yet taken in the Centre's growth. Since that time meetings have continued without interruption.

"Round the Centre, however, has been drawn a wider circle than is at first apparent; for, through the Swami's frequent travels, it counts today friends and adherents in many distant places, who write: 'You do not know how many eyes are turned towards your Boston Centre, how many hearts are longing to be with you there.' The Swami's first long journey was undertaken four years ago, when he set out for India. Checked at Naples by the cholera quarantine, he paid a short visit to some devoted students of Vedanta in Germany and delivered a lecture at Stratford-on-Avon during the Shakespearian Festival. Also in India he spoke on various occasions. The following summer (1912) he returned to Europe and spent six months in active teaching. He went first to Germany, where he remained for a time conducting daily meditation and study classes. Next he visited friends in Italy. August was spent at Gryon-sur-Bex in Switzerland, where

a number of people had gathered to profit by the opportunity to hear an accredited Eastern teacher. His visit here had come about in an unexpected way. A Swiss lady and gentleman, while stopping in an English boarding-house in Calcutta, had been given a copy of the Swami's book, 'The Path of Devotion.' The great help they derived from it led them, on their return to Switzerland, to write asking permission to translate it into French for the benefit of their own people. The letter was forwarded to the Boston Centre and when it was learned that the Swami was just sailing for Europe, he was urged to pass several months at Gryon. This, however, was not possible, as his visit to Florence in July had led to the arrangement for a course of eight lectures to be given there in the autumn. The Swami returned to Boston in November and continued the regular work at the Centre until March (1913), when he again spent two months abroad, lecturing and holding classes in Paris and Geneva. The interest awakened in Geneva was so strong that he was invited to give another course of lectures there this last summer, after which a definite group was formed. At no time during his absence was the work discontinued at the Boston Centre.

"Beyond this circle again, there sweeps a still larger circle in the books and pamphlets sent out every year to hundreds of unknown readers. The past year was not one of great activity in the publishing department, as the Centre's chief energy and interest were necessarily directed to the preparation of the new home; but two titles were added to the list of publications, bringing the total number of books and pamphlets brought out since the department was created in 1910 to 12,000, of which considerably over 6000 have gone into circulation."

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

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BY

Swami Paramananda

of India

Chapel of the Vedanta Centre

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(Opposite Convention Garden. Ipswich St. Car)

Seventh Season—1915

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SUNDAY, 11 A. M.

SUBJECTS

March	*7th*	*Universal Ideal of Religion.*
"	*14th*	*Life after Death.*
"	*21st*	*Creative Power of Thought.*
"	*28th*	*Freedom of the Soul.*

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The April number of "The Message of the East" will contain articles on "Freedom and Immortality," "Existence of Soul in Man" and "Life after Death"; also the continuation of the drama "Vilwamangal the Saint" by the famous Bengali Dramatist, G. C. Ghosh.

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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YOGA AND THE CHRISTIAN MYSTICS

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

The origin of mysticism is to be found in the human heart, for it is the natural tendency of every living creature to try to unravel whatever is hidden from him. Being impelled by this tendency, some, braver than others, have been able to penetrate the depths of the Unseen, and such people are called Mystics. They use a language with which the world is not acquainted, they perceive truths which to them are more real than what we see in the external universe, but because these do not coincide with the experiences of everyday life, the common mind cannot comprehend their visions or understand their words, and therefore it looks upon them as mysterious. Anything that is out of the ordinary course of events is always so regarded, and it is for this reason that the things of the spiritual realm are believed to be so full of mystery. As it is beautifully described in one of the Sanskrit Scriptures: "That which is night to all beings, therein the self-subjugated remains awake; and there where all beings are awake, that is night for the knower of Truth." This shows the two poles of existence. The spiritual plane, which to the worldly-minded is darkness, seems like bright daylight to the wise; while the sense plane, where ordinary mortals are awake and active, appears as dark night to the wise man who has realized the

unreality and fleeting character of the sense world. If we recognize this, and instead of condemning as strange or absurd whatever the spiritually-minded, highly evolved ones bring to us, if we try to study and grasp their true meaning, we shall find that they are only talking of another sphere of existence as yet unexplored by us. Each one of us possesses a certain understanding, but it is at present very limited; as our knowledge grows, however, perhaps the very things which now we cannot accept, because they seem unreal and impossible, will become realities to us.

Regarding the rise of mysticism, we cannot say it began at any particular period of history. Nor can we claim that it is the exclusive property of any one race or creed, for it is to be found everywhere, among all religions and nations; and if we could destroy the whole of existing knowledge and leave mankind stranded without the help of any past records, very soon we should see the struggle for Vision beginning afresh and man would again discover the same hidden truths. It is the inherent tendency of the human heart, which naturally seeks to penetrate and reveal what is obscure. We find Mystics among the Greeks, the Egyptians, the Hindus, the Sufis, the Neo-Platonists, as well as among the Christians. Everywhere has been the same hunger for knowledge of the Final Reality towards which all life converges. As Prof. Royce says in his "Studies of Good and Evil": "If you pass backwards from Eckhart, past Dionysius, past Plotinus, far beyond and before the Christian era, you find, as I have already said, in the very dawn of Hindoo thought, in the Upanishads, the same problem, with the same elements . . . already one conceives the world as the world of the Absolute Self." The Vedic sages define this Absolute as "the One God, hidden in all beings, All-pervading, the Absolute Self within all beings, watching over all our works, the Witness, the Perceiver, the

Only One." (Svetasvatara-Upanishad.) "It is wise to confess that all things are one," the Greek Heraclitus declares; while Plotinus, the Neo-Platonist, writes: "Good is not external to anyone, but He is present with all things, though they are ignorant that He is so"; and a Sufi poet sings:

"I have put duality away. I have seen the two worlds as one;
One I seek, One I know, One I see, One I call;
He is the first, He is the last, He is the outward, He is the inward."

The effort to pierce the veil and come face to face with this One, has led men everywhere to evolve practical methods of spiritual development. In India these methods were systematized into a science known as *Yoga,* a Sanskrit term which means literally "union"—union between the individual and the Absolute, between God and the worshipper, between man's higher and lower self: what is called by the Christian mystics the *Unio Mystica,* or the mystic union. "Now what is this union?" we read in the "Theologia Germanica." "It is that we should be of a truth purely, simply and wholly at one with the One Eternal will of God, or altogether without will, so that the created will should flow out into the Eternal Will, and be swallowed up and lost therein, so that the Eternal Will alone should do and leave undone in us." Or as it is said in the Mundaka-Upanishad: "The wise having reached Him, Who is omnipresent, devoted to Him, enter into Him wholly. . . . The knower of the Highest Absolute becomes like Him and one with Him."

That there is no fundamental difference between the Mystics of the Occident and the Mystics of the Orient becomes more and more apparent as we study without bias; for in both we find the same intense yearning to reach the Ultimate, to solve the problem of the Invisible. All alike in their strivings are led to the same practice of discrimination, renunciation,

concentration and contemplation, which constitute the basic principles of Yoga. The first step in the spiritual journey must always be to distinguish between the Real and the apparent; the second, to choose the Real and break away from the unreal; the result of this will be single-heartedness or concentration on the Real, which inevitably leads to the habit of contemplation. "When the interior and contemplative man has followed after his own eternal image," the Flemish priest, John Ruysbroeck, writes, "he is illumined by divine truth and partakes anew every instant of the eternal birth; and by means of the light he enters into divine contemplation. And from this comes to pass a loving union, wherein above all else our eternal beatitude resides." And Meister Eckhart declares: "When jointly are the faculties withdrawn from all their business, their objects all, then will this word be spoken. Hence it is said: 'In the midst of silence was the secret word spoken unto me.' The more thou art in trim all faculties to indraw and forget all things and all their forms that ever were received into thyself, the more thou dost forget the creature thus, so much the nearer art thou unto this, so much the readier for it." For "Ignorance is destroyed by the unbroken practice of discrimination," we read in Patanjali's "Yoga Aphorisms." "*Samadhi,* or God-Union, comes through concentration and the discrimination of the Real; while through meditation the Yogi's vision becomes unobstructed from the atom to the Infinite."

Thus we see that wherever a desire for spiritual vision arises, there is a natural impulse to indraw and concentrate the mind on things not visible to the senses. As the physical eyes close to external objects, the inner spiritual eye opens—the eye which all the Mystics call the third eye—"that eye whose vision is clarified by divine grace and by a holy life," so we learn from Richard of St. Victor. "This eye enjoys the im-

mediate discernment of unseen Truth, as the eye of the body sees sensible objects." Or as Lord Krishna declares to Arjuna in the Bhagavad-Gita: "But with these eyes of thine thou canst not see Me. Behold I give thee Divine sight."

The ideas of renunciation and contemplation are little in accord with our present over-active, acquisitive life; but if we value the effect as we find it in the Saints and great Seers, then we should not reject the cause. How, indeed, can we really honor and admire the result, if we are unwilling to accept the methods which the Yogis and Saints have employed to attain their sainthood? And there can be no doubt that they all practised rigid self-denial, as well as constant meditation, in order to subdue their lower nature and purify their vision. Everywhere, too, the methods employed are strikingly similar in nature. The idea of renunciation, so marked in the life of St. Francis, is not peculiarly Christian. Indian history is full of like examples of Yogis or men who renounced wealth, comfort, even throne, in order to gain God-Union. To my mind, all saints, whether Christian or non-Christian, are alike in their saintliness; there is no difference when the Absolute Union is reached. A saintly character is like a flower; wherever he may be, he has the same fragrance, the same quality of radiating light and loveliness. Mysticism, it is true, has more often been identified with the East; but if we mean by mysticism spiritual vision, transcending the limitation of the senses, it is not confined to the Eastern world, but is to be found wherever there is spiritual illumination. That the East, however, and especially India, had a strong influence on the early Christian Mystics cannot be denied; for it is generally admitted that the so-called Dionysius the Areopagite, one of the most eminent of early Christian Mystics, and St. Augustine imbibed their "passion for the Absolute" as well as their methods from Plotinus, the great Neo-Platonist, who was an

avowed student of Eastern thought. It is even recorded that he joined an expedition to Persia in order to study the philosophy of Persia and India. On his return he settled in Rome, where he preached asceticism and the joy of the contemplative life with such impressive eloquence that many among the hundreds of leading Romans, both men and women, who flocked daily to hear him, gave all their fortunes to the poor, set their slaves free and took up the life of renunciation, much as did later the followers of St. Francis.

It is only through one-pointedness of devotion and singleness of purpose that we are able to penetrate the mysteries of the unseen universe; and many of the Saints and Sages, in attempting to do this, transcend the sense plane altogether and become so focussed and united with the Spirit that the things of the material world cannot disturb them. "As happened to St. Paul," Meister Eckhart writes, "what time he said, 'Whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of the body I cannot tell. God knoweth.' Then had the spirit all the powers of the soul so altogether drawn into itself, that from him had the body disappeared. Then was the memory no more at work, nor reason, nor the senses; neither the faculties whose care it is to tend and guide the body; upgathered were life-fire and heat of life; hence did the body not decline away, though for three days he neither ate nor drank." It is also told of Brother Bernard, in "The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi," that on one occasion, while he was assisting at Mass with his whole mind uplifted unto God, he became so rapt and absorbed in God that when the Body of Christ was elevated, he saw nothing at all, nor kneeled him down, nor drew back his hood, as the others did; but without movement of his eyes, with gaze fast fixed, he stood from morning until Nones, not heeding aught; and after Nones returning to himself again, he went through the House crying with a voice of

glad surprise." This shows that the state of *Samadhi* or super-consciousness, described in the Vedic Scriptures, is not peculiar to the Indo-Aryans, but that wherever intensity of spiritual yearning lifts man above the limitations of the senses, he enjoys the ecstasy of a new consciousness, which is, as the Upanishads declare, "beyond mind and speech." The Blessed Angela of Foligno dwells on the wonders of this state. Threefold is the transformation of the soul, she declares. The first is "when the soul uses all its endeavor to imitate the life of Christ, the second is when the soul is united to God and loves God, the which, however, it is able to explain and set forth in words. The third is when the soul is so entirely made one with God and God with it, that it knoweth and enjoyeth with God the most high things, the which cannot possibly be set forth in words nor imagined save by him who feeleth them."

The whole science of Yoga is directed towards the attainment of this state of super-consciousness or *Samadhi,* and it offers various methods by which it may be accomplished. Recognizing the great diversity in human nature, it lays down different paths for the varying constitutions of mankind. To the active it points the way through *Karma-Yoga* or realization by means of selfless performance of duty; *Raja-Yoga* shows how the same end may be gained through the subjugation of bodily passions and the practice of concentration and meditation; those of strongly intellectual and philosophic tendencies are led by *Jnana-Yoga* or the path of right discrimination; while *Bhakti-Yoga* teaches how through whole-hearted devotion one may attain God-Union. Whichever of these methods a man chooses, however, he must in some measure practise all, if he would attain the state of beatitude enjoyed by the Mystics.

But, we may ask, why should we not be satisfied with our present state of consciousness; why should we care to develop

any other? The Yogis reply that until man has gone beyond the three ordinary states of consciousness,—sleeping, dreaming and waking—and reached the fourth state, he cannot be free from error; and so long as he blunders, he must suffer. In the state of superconsciousness he has all the strength of the other three states and something more; for he transcends the limits of the body, mind and senses and finds that which satisfies his soul. In order to taste this superconscious joy, however, we must as St. Paul says, "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." And the Unseen can only be perceived through the power of meditation. "That supreme happiness, which belongs to a mind which by deep meditation has been washed clean from all impurity and has entered within its Divine Nature," we are told in the Maitrayana-Brahmana-Upanishad, "cannot be described here by words, it can be felt by the inward power only." In the same Upanishad we read: "Water in water, fire in fire, ether in ether, no one can distinguish them; likewise a man, whose mind has entered into such union with the Supreme that it cannot be distinguished from Him, attains freedom"; a verse which finds its echo centuries later in these words of St. Bernard: "As a drop of water poured into wine loses itself and takes the color and flavor of wine; or as a bar of iron, heated red-hot becomes like fire itself, forgetting its own nature; so in the Saints all human affections melt away, by some unspeakable transmutation, into the Will of God."

Thus it is obvious that this higher state of consciousness has been known in all ages. Vedic Seers, Greek Philosophers, Mohammedan Saints and Christian Mystics have all alike experienced its transcendental, beatific joys. The reality of this consciousness was most forcibly illustrated in our own time by

the great Seer and Mystic, Sri Ramakrishna, who lived in India during the latter part of the nineteenth century. It is known that he attained the highest state of *Samadhi* or God-consciousness in which he forgot his bodily existence altogether and remained absolutely united with his Ideal, Whom he called the Divine Mother. As he communed with his Mother in the hours of superconscious illumination, he came to realize that the Infinite Spirit, Whom he worshipped as the Mother of the universe, was no other than the One Whom the Christians invoke as Father in Heaven, the Mohammedans as Allah, the Jews as Jehovah, the Zoroastrians as Ahura-Mazda. And he declared: "Many are the names of God, and infinite the forms that lead us to know Him. Common man in ignorance says: 'My religion is the only one, my religion is the best'; but when his heart is illumined by true knowledge, he realizes that above all these wars of creeds and sects presides the One, Indivisible, Eternal Deity." Although practically without education, knowing little of history or geography, yet by finding within himself that Truth which is the common birthright of all mankind, he gained a universal understanding and a catholicity of vision which has rarely been equalled. Having himself attained union with the Supreme Spirit, he realized his union with every human heart and the union of all human hearts with the Absolute. So must it be with every true Mystic who lives a practical spiritual life and finds this union, because in order to find it, he rises to a plane of consciousness where there can be no limitation of race, caste, creed or nationality.

When spirituality becomes vital, then the world produces Saints and Sages, who make God a reality to us. But when material advancement is the aim of existence, men are swept by desire for things of this life only. Then the lives of the Saints grow more mysterious and their words lose all weight.

Let us hope and pray that we may again revive the visions of these Mystics and experience for ourselves the joys of the contemplative life and of God-Union.

Fools blame the actions of the great, because they are extraordinary and their reasons past finding out by ordinary mortals.—*Kalidas.*

THE JOY OF GOD-VISION

Bengalee Hymn

(Translated especially for "The Message of the East")

Reality, All-good, All-beautiful, when wilt Thy form shine forth in the temple of my heart? Ah, when will that day come?

Looking and looking ever ceaselessly, into the sea of Beauty All-divine I shall dive deep.

Thou wilt come into my heart in the form of Wisdom Infinite.

My mind, awe-struck and overwhelmed with ecstasy, will take its shelter at Thy Blessed Feet.

Bliss nectar-like, sweet and life-bestowing, will well up in my soul.

As when the moon rises, the bird chakara is mad with joy; so, O Lord, shall I be, when Thou dost manifest Thyself.

O King of kings, without a second, One, gracious, full of peace,

I at Thy feet shall wholly give myself and realize the aim of all my life.

Thus even in this body, even here, shall I taste joy celestial. O, what boon, what blessed boon is this?

When shall I see Thy pure and Holy Being?

At Thy glory all gloom of sin shall from me flee away, as night doth flee away before the dawn.

Light Thou within my heart a burning faith, which like the pole-star shall unfailing be,

And thus, Friend of the meek, do Thou fulfill my mind's desire.

So lost in endless bliss, bliss of Thy love, I shall forget myself most utterly, having Thee for mine own all day and night.

O, when will that day come?

EVIL AND ITS REMEDY

By Sister Devamata

Whence comes Evil? If there is a Supreme Deity, Who is All-powerful, All-knowing, wherefore so much sorrow and misery in the world? If an All-loving God rules in the heavens, why does He let His children suffer? Who has not asked these questions at some time and found no answer! Who of us has not beaten against this thing we call evil and felt himself baffled by it! Why? Because always we seek to escape it, never to understand it. In our tireless struggle against it, we forget to ask: What is it? Has it a real existence? Do we ourselves create it or does it come from God? Yet if we would but stop and analyze it, we would find, as the great Sages tell us, that evil is only ignorance. It is seeing all things in the universe as separate parts, unrelated to the Whole. If a child, in playing with a crystal ball, should carelessly drop it and cut his hand on the broken edge, he could as well cry out, "Why does glass cut? Why do cuts sting?" Had he handled the ball intelligently and kept it whole, it would not have hurt him. So with us. We break the universe into many pieces and the jagged edges wound us. We look upon each fragment as an independent object and fail to see its true beauty and meaning. It is to this partial view of things that we may trace all our discontent and

love of change; for man reaches out instinctively for the perfect, the complete; and only when he has found a whole in which no part is missing will that unrest cease which is at the root of all his wrong-doing.

The problem of evil's cure, therefore, becomes the problem of piecing together a broken universe, finding the Whole in which all these parts belong. To do this we must discover the original plan; otherwise all our efforts will be fruitless—as fruitless as has always been the endeavor of those who through the ages have sought to rebuild the world without knowing the Architect's design. And where can the plan be found? In the mind and heart. Out of the realm of thought and feeling has come every individual conception which has later taken form, and from the same source has sprung the Universal plan. If, therefore, we would know it, we must turn within. The majority of workers, however, are not willing to do this. It requires too much faith, patience and stillness to deal with the subtler side of things; so generation after generation we see earnest souls trying to reform society by external means. But if it could be done that way, why did not Christ or Buddha once for all make such laws and create such conditions as to set the world right forever? They had the power and wisdom and love; why did they change so little the general face of society? Because they knew that the only efficacious course was to draw men inward and to show each one how to readjust his own world. Even dealing with such material questions as food, drink and clothing, Jesus tells His followers to "seek first the kingdom of God"—that kingdom within—and "all these things will be added." He would surely not have offered counsel that was not practical; but He had proved by His own experience that only as man lives in contact with the inner Source will he have

the light and strength necessary to master the difficulties of his outer life.

Every sincere effort to benefit mankind, however directed, must inevitably produce some good; but the result might be much richer were it not neutralized by lack of insight; for too often the very people who are most anxious to remedy social evils are themselves unwittingly the cause of them through their mode of life, their artificial standards and their unconscious ignorance. Can one blind man lead another to safety? Can one who does not himself know how to swim save another from drowning? If we are ignorant of the fundamental forces at play in our own nature, if we have not been able to establish our own lives on a sound basis of understanding and wisdom, how can we expect to do it for others? Because we happen to wear good clothes and some one else is shabbily dressed, does that mean that we are wiser or more efficient? Perhaps tomorrow the conditions may be reversed. Or can we be sure in our present state of limited knowledge that the thing we call evil is evil, and that which we call good is good? Have we not seen in our own life that what seemed good at one moment, in the light of new experience appeared an evil? We regard poverty as a great misfortune, yet have we not been happy and miserable with the same income? Then money cannot be the cause of happiness. We cry out against the social order which denies a soft bed to every member of society. Yet every night thousands overwhelmed by grief or pain are tossing on the softest beds, longing for the morning. The remedy for man's misery then must be beyond these material conditions; for change them as often as we may, the old social disorders reassert themselves in new guise. We all know that unless the cause can be eradicated, we may remove the effect a hundred times and a hundred times it will rise again. The root must be sev-

ered, and the root of every outer wrong lies in the hidden depths of human nature. No man can reach it save through his own inner being; and not until he has penetrated there, can he be sure that he has touched the real cause of the surface evil against which he is today battling. Therefore it is said in the Svetasvatara-Upanishad: "Only when men shall roll up the sky like a hide, will there be an end of misery, unless God has been discovered in the heart."

Nature is made up of many strata. Matter manifests itself in different states. The Vedic Sages classified these under three heads: *Tamas, Rajas* and *Sattwa*,—density, dullness, darkness or the brute state; activity, unrest, endeavor or the human state; and lightness, serenity, illumination or the God-state. Like a shuttle matter moves back and forth through these states, weaving in nature the pattern of creation. To the illumined saint the condition of *Tamas* is a frightful evil; to the man over-powered by brute tendencies calm illumination seems unbearable, as it also is to the over-active man who finds more joy in endeavor than in ultimate knowledge, who looks upon life as a merry-go-round of "eternal progression" and shrinks from any attainment that would imply cessation of effort. But we may each one of us hold these different points of view at different stages of our development. How then are we to know which is the best to cultivate in our neighbor? Only by reaching That which stands behind all. Until then we are at most groping and experimenting, unable to know with certainty whether we are hindering or helping; whether we are eliminating or fostering an evil; whether after all our success may not seem failure and our greatest failure a victory in God's eyes.

Through higher understanding alone can we meet the

problem of evil. We may make law after law, but if a man has not some evidence that he will gain more by observing than by infringing that law, he will break or evade it. Nor will prisons or even death teach him to obey. He will only learn to be law-abiding by seeing that those who make and keep the law are in every way happier, finer, nobler, better off than he. The true reformer or philanthropist must be not merely "God-fearing," but "God-knowing;" he must be "above the law" because he has conquered those desires and animal passions which bring man under it; he must be able to see and awaken the immortal soul even in the most degraded criminal, because he has already found it in himself. Until we have attained knowledge and self-mastery, we can never solve our neighbor's problem; we can only try to solve our own. But by doing this intelligently and bravely, we may show him how to attack his. This does not mean, however, that we are to live insulated lives, feeling no current of love, no desire to help. On the contrary, if we are sincerely striving for the highest light, we cannot help serving others at every step. All true growth indeed lies along the path of loving service. But we must constantly remember that we cannot carry another further than we have gone ourselves. We cannot teach what we have not learned, and this applies as truly to self-control, to strength and wisdom, as to geography and arithmetic.

If we would truly benefit mankind, we must know the fundamental cause of existing evils. We must see why things are as they are. And where is the cause? In each human heart, bred of human or brute desire. If we examine, we shall find that nearly all of man's wrong-doing springs from a wholesome impulse—the impulse to forget himself. All the restless pursuit of pleasure and excitement, which so easily leads to immorality and crime,

is in reality the unconscious effort of man to escape from his lower self, which encumbers and smothers him. He yearns for freedom, but he does not know how to attain it. The girl who works wearily in the factory dreams of joyful idleness; but let her leave the confinement of the workroom and out of unsatisfied desire for better clothes and amusement she will create a new bondage of discontent. Are the young girls who are free to go about as they choose really happier than those in the mill? The same hunger is in their souls, the same impelling desire to flee from themselves persists. Even though they may not know it, their hearts cry out to break the bondage of the brute or human and find fulfillment in the Divine. Are we prepared to tell them how to do this? Can it be accomplished by any act of legislature or by any readjustment of the social order? If we tear away the barriers of their prison of today and let them pass out, it will only be into a larger prison. We may better their physical condition, increase their opportunities for learning; they will still stand behind the walls of their own unconquered passions and new evils will result. Do we not see it every day in our schools? Whether the enclosure be wide or narrow, it shuts the prisoner in and his spirit chafes against it.

Yet until we ourselves have gone beyond the walls and gained freedom, we cannot lead another out. All we can do is to make his prison life more comfortable, and this we should strive to do with our whole heart. Recognizing, however, that there is a larger service possible, let us begin to prepare ourselves for it. Let us establish a better balance and devote more time to *thinking,* a little less to *doing.* Let us realize that activity in itself is not a merit; for unless it is wise activity, it merely disturbs

the world like the noise of foolish children. Let us cultivate the habit of reflection, of introspective study, of inner searching for that gate through which man can escape from the finite into the Infinite. Did not Christ withdraw into the wilderness before He began His work of saving men? Was this not what Buddha did when He awakened to the misery of the world? Seeing sickness, old age and death, did He try to heal all the sick, to wipe every weeping eye, to stay the hand of time? No; He plunged within Himself and sought for some inner cure that would lift man far beyond the plane of suffering. Deeper and deeper He went, until He found That which was Complete, Whole, Infinite—an Eternal Refuge from all sorrow.

We, too, must begin to penetrate the unknown depths of our being and make acquaintance with our soul. To do this, however, we need not give up the world, retire to the forest and pass our days in meditation. We have only to concern ourselves less with effects and more with causes; to practise in our daily tasks the habit of discrimination, keeping uppermost in our mind the thought, "Is this real or unreal? If unreal, then I must pass it by, for I have time only for the real things of life." And since to penetrate to the causal realm requires a strong will and keen vision, we must learn to concentrate all our forces and cultivate singleness of heart, as well as great simplicity in our mode of living. We are setting out like mountain-climbers to explore new heights, so we must make our kits as light as possible. We must simplify our daily routine, our possessions, our relations, our social obligations. We must no longer believe that we are helping people by joining in their mad course or by concurring in their ignorance, even though they may demand it and look upon us as selfish if we deny them. We must cease to

live on the outskirts of our being and move steadily towards the centre. Then, just as when one advances towards the centre of a circle, all the radii converge and each grows nearer to the other; so as we go deeper within towards the Central Source, we shall find ourselves drawing nearer to every living creature and we shall do as naturally for others as for ourselves.

Only when we have reached this sense of oneness shall we be able to truly help our fellowmen; for having joined ourselves with the Universal, we shall have the whole power and wisdom of the Universe behind us. The Infinite will act through us and we shall move in accordance with His eternal laws. Why are the images in India made with many arms and legs? To symbolize the great fact that God serves through numberless hands, He walks on countless feet, He sees through an endless number of eyes, He hears through endless ears. So our hands and feet, our eyes and ears can be made channels through which He will work. When that time comes, there will be no limit to our devotion and understanding, no limit to our power to hear the cry of misery, no limit to the wisdom and strength which will flow through us to relieve that misery. Is it not worth trying for? Is it not worth our while to give up these weak, faltering, individual efforts and make ourselves one with that Eternal, Omnipresent, Infinite Power? In no other way can we escape the evils of our own life; in no other way can we remedy evil in the world.

Find God, purity, holiness, all else will come. Seek the Highest, always the Highest, for in the Highest is eternal bliss.—*Swami Vivekananda.*

THE SAINT PAVHARI BABA

Wonderful humility and intense realization marked the life of the great Indian Saint, Pavhari Baba. Born during the last century of Brahman parents in a village near Benares, he spent his early years on the banks of the Ganges with an uncle, who, having taken the vow of celibacy, brought up this nephew as his heir. The boy was studious and highly gifted, but there was little in his gay, fun-loving nature to suggest the later saint. Practical jokes were more to his taste than meditation; but the death of his uncle threw a first dark veil of gravity and sorrow over his boy heart. The world suddenly grew empty and to fill the void there rose within him an insatiable thirst for knowledge. Taking his water-jar and traveller's staff, he set out on unrecorded journeys. Where he went can only be surmised from his exhaustive knowledge of Dravidian languages and of the old Bengali of Chaitanya's Order, which testify to long researches in Southern India and in Bengal. One supreme event, however, stands out in this period of obscure wanderings: on the mountain of Girnar he received his initiation into the practices of Yoga. The mountain is one specially sacred to the Buddhists. At its base on a massive rock was inscribed the first-deciphered edict of the great King Asoka; and beneath it lay buried and forest-covered for long centuries the mighty Stupas or pagodas, wherein precious relics were preserved. The Hindus, too, regard it as a holy place, for on its summit many great Yogis have attained illumination.

Here the youthful Brahmacharin began his serious quest of the inner light; a time of study and practical training at Benares followed, after which we find him once more back in his boyhood's home on the Ganges. Years of travel and sojourn in sacred shrines, of earnest searching and discipline had chastened and purified him. A light shone in his face, a

quiet simple majesty enveloped him, and his playmates of other days as they welcomed him felt awe-struck and asked no questions. He made little effort to rejoin them; but, retiring to a cave dug in the river bank, he began a life of austerest self-denial. All day he would busy himself in his hermitage on the nearer shore, conducting worship and preparing the most savory food, which he would distribute to his friends or to the poor; then sating his own appetite with a handful of bitter Nimba leaves, when all were in bed, he would swim across the river and pass the whole night in meditation, returning at dawn to repeat again the same routine. Sometimes he would be gone for days or even weeks, and during these long intervals of retirement no one knew on what he subsisted; hence the name Pavhari given him, which means "one who lives on air." As time went on and the report of his saintliness spread abroad, bringing an ever-increasing number to do him honor, he withdrew more and more from view. People would wait all day and many days at the closed gate of his little garden, in the hope of catching a glimpse of him or of hearing perhaps a word of wisdom; but no sound or movement would come from within, where in the depths of a cave behind his hut he sat in rapt contemplation. When asked why he shut himself away when he might do so much to benefit the world, he would question in reply: "Do you think physical help the only help? Is it not possible that one mind may help other minds even without activity of the body?" His own life was a conclusive answer; for his silent love, his gentle bearing, his whole-hearted devotion to his Ideal cast a spell of sanctity over the whole country round about. No one could approach him without feeling the power of his holiness; and to this day in all the surrounding villages there are those who tell of his mighty, though unspoken influence.

"He was," as an eminent Hindu who knew him has said,

"one more example of the Indian ideal of teaching through life and not through words. Persons of this type are entirely averse to preaching what they know, for they are forever convinced that it is internal discipline alone that leads to Truth and not words." To such men religion means not merely the practice of virtue, but an intense search after and realization of God in this life. Along the way, time for them melts into eternity, making every moment of equal and incalculable value; while each small experience is glorified by the conscious presence of the Divine working through it. Thus pain and fever and even the serpent's bite were to Pavhari Baba "Messengers from the Beloved"; for he could see God's hand blessing there where others felt it strike in retribution. The smallest task never seemed trivial to him. It is said that he polished a copper pot or cooked a meal with the same absorption and devotion as he put into his daily worship, for his rule of work was: "The means should be loved and cared for as if it were the end itself." Poverty was in his eyes a blessed privilege. "The Lord is the wealth of those who have nothing," he would exclaim, "yes, of those who have thrown away all desire of possession—even the possession of their own soul." He kept nothing for himself. A little food left from time to time at the door by his brother, a few cooking pots and worship vessels, that was all; yet even these, we are told, one day tempted a passing thief, who entered and was gathering them into a bundle when he heard the saint approaching. Frightened, he dropped everything and fled; but the saint, picking up the bundle, ran after him. Mile after mile he followed, calling and calling to him to stop, but the man ran on until panting he dropped by the roadside. Then Pavhari Baba, overtaking him, layed the bundle at his feet, saying with folded hands and tearful eyes: "Why did you not take it? It is yours. I have been trying to give it to you." The weary thief

looked at his pursuer in amazement; then lifting the bundle, he went back with the saint and became his devout follower.

It was with the greatest reluctance that Pavhari Baba ever assumed the role of teacher; but when on rare occasions he broke his accustomed silence, it was as if an inexhaustible fountain of wisdom welled up from the depths of his inner being, while the rare sweetness of his voice gave a peculiar exalted charm to his words. Yet even when he taught, it was always indirectly and with complete self-effacement. Thus this silent life went on, bearing witness to the power of Yoga and giving to mankind one more rich example of purity, lowliness and whole-hearted devotion to God.

REPORTS

Encouraging reports from various branches of the Ramakrishna Mission in India have been received during the past month. The Mayavati Charitable Dispensary in the Himalayas tells of its eleventh year of useful work, during which the Dispensary, through the generous contributions of the public, has been able to erect a suitable building and to secure the services of a well-trained physician. The number of patients treated during the year was 985, a large number for the sparsely populated hill district, where the Dispensary is located and where the sick sometimes travel 10 miles to secure treatment, there being only one other medical Relief Station in the whole region.

The Ramakrishna Orphanage at Sargachi in Bengal only now issues its first general Report, although it has been in existence for 18 years. It was founded in 1897 by Swami Akhandanda, one of Sri Ramakrishna's direct disciples, who, while wandering through the Murshidabad District, gathered round him one by one a little group of lonely boys orphaned by the plague then raging there. Some 30 of these are now young men, earning their own livelihood, and with them the

institution has also grown. It now comprises a lower primary and a middle grade school, a technical institution for teaching carpentry, weaving, etc., and a farm for practical training in agriculture. As nearly all the people of the locality are small farmers, who are occupied through the day-light hours in their fields, the Swami has also opened a night school for them. All the teaching is given without regard to cast or creed: Mahommedan boys sit in the class beside the Hindus and there are also a few girls. A charitable Dispensary was opened four years ago and already 4251 patients have received care. A friend of the Boston Vedanta Centre has recently sent a valuable contribution of rare medical books and useful medicines to this department of the work. The Swami is also glad to receive any offerings for his boys, either books for the Library, tools, games, or anything that will instruct or amuse them. The Orphanage has now acquired a large piece of land on which it is hoped, as funds are collected, to erect a number of buildings for the various branches of the work.

At the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Mutthigunj, Allahabad, a hospital founded three years ago, 5060 poor patients were cared for, of which 523 were Mohammedans and 88 Christians; while at the Ramakrishna out-door Dispensary in Allahabad itself 1179 patients were relieved.

The number of Societies bearing the names of Sri Ramakrishna or Swami Vivekananda and devoted to the ideal of Self-abnegation and Service which they preached and lived, continues to increase. Every month brings Reports of the good work being done by some of these. Thus the Fifth Annual Report of the Ramakrishma Sevak Sompradaya at Cuttak near Puri tells us of different useful branches of

service, most notable among which is a Free Boarding House maintained to provide a proper home for poor but deserving students. In Rangoon there is an active Ramakrishna Society which has organized a Social Service League and opened night classes for the education of poor laborers. We also learn from its Report that during the Bengal floods the Society helped the Ramakrishna Mission Relief Work by contributions of money. Other organizations heard from are the Vivekananda Society at Colombo, and the Ramakrishna Bhaktajana Sanjhan at Koltayan, Malabar, both of which are making active efforts to foster a spirit of devotion and charity in their respective communities.

* * *

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna, the founder of the Ramakrishna Mission, of which the Vedanta Centre of Boston forms a part, was celebrated at the new home of the Centre on Thursday, February 18th. The day was set apart for religious worship and closed with a public Service in the evening at which a number of friends assisted. The exercises began with music by violin and organ, followed by a prayer, after which Swami Paramananda, who established and is still in charge of the Boston work, delivered an earnest and impressive address on the life of the great Indian Teacher. With deep feeling he told of His extraordinary simplicity and purity, His wonderful tolerance and His great love for mankind; and showed that the lessons He had brought were not only for India but for the world. After more music, the Swami chanted a Sanskrit Litany and gave the benediction. An informal social gathering then followed, at which refreshments were served. In memory of the day a copy of the Swami's book "The Way of Peace and Blessedness" was presented to each guest.

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"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

Vol. IV April, 1915 No. 4

The permanence of the external world is inevitably joined to the permanence of the internal; and however plausible any theory of the universe may seem which denies the permanence of the one and asserts that of the other, the theorist himself will find that in his own mechanism not one conscious act is possible without the permanence of both internal and external worlds as one of the factors in the motive cause. Although it is perfectly true that when the human mind transcends its own limitations, it finds the duality reduced to an indivisible unity; on this side of the unconditioned the whole objective world—that is to say the world we know—is and can be alone known to us as existing for the subject; therefore before we would be able to conceive the annihilation of the subject, we are bound to conceive the annihilation of the object. So far it is plain enough. But now comes the difficulty. I cannot think of myself ordinarily as anything but a body. My idea of my own permanence includes my idea of myself as a body. But the body is obviously impermanent, as is the whole of nature a constantly vanishing quantity. Where then is this permanence?

There is one more wonderful idea connected with our lives—the idea of freedom. This is the idea that guides our every footstep, makes our movements possible, determines our relations to each other; nay, is the very warp

and woof in the fabric of human life. Intellectual knowledge tries to drive it inch by inch from its territory; post after post is snatched away from its domains, and each step is made fast and iron-bound with the railroadings of cause and effect. But it laughs at all our attempts; and lo, it rises above all this massive pile of law and causation with which we tried to smother it to death. How can it be otherwise? The limited always requires a higher generalization to explain it. The bound can only be explained by the free, the cause by the uncaused. But again the same difficulty is also here What is free? The body, or even the mind? It is apparent to all that they are as much bound by law as anything else in the universe. The problem resolves itself into this dilemma: Either the whole universe is a mass of never-ceasing change and nothing more, irrevocably bound by the law of causation, yet curiously producing an irradicable delusion of permanence and freedom; or there is in us and in the universe something which is permanent and free and which proves that the basal, constitutional belief of the human mind is not a delusion.

It is the duty of science to explain facts by bringing them to a higher generalization. Any explanation therefore that wants first to destroy a part of the facts given to be explained, in order to fit itself to the remainder, is not science, whatever else it may be. Now any explanation that tries to overlook the fact of this persistent and all necessary idea of freedom commits the above-mentioned mistake of denying a portion of the facts in order to explain the rest, and is therefore wrong. The only alternative possible then is to acknowledge in harmony with our nature that there is something in us which is free and permanent. But it is not the body; neither is it the mind. The body is dying every minute. The mind is constantly changing. The body is a combina-

tion, so is the mind and as such can never reach a state above all change. But beyond this momentary sheathing of gross matter, beyond even the finer covering of the mind, is the *Atman,* the true Self of man, the permanent, the ever-free.

—Extract by Swami Vivekananda.

THE EXISTENCE OF SOUL IN MAN

By N. Ramanuja Charya, M. A.

One of the most difficult problems of metaphysical science which press upon us for solution whenever our thoughts are turned away from the material concerns of life and directed inwards, is that of the existence of what is called the soul in man. The last word of modern philosophy on the subject seems to be that its existence is not capable of any satisfactory scientific demonstration, and that the question therefore should be relegated to the realm of the unknowable and the insoluble. This conclusion of the scientific philosophy of the West, added to the materialistic tendencies of the age, has been the sole cause of the prevalent disease of soul-blindness and its many attendant evils. This disease has wholly transformed the nature of man. It has changed the purpose of his actions and thoughts, the aim of his life and its best ideals. It has introduced the dangerous principle of unlimited competition for pleasure and pelf in society, in place of self-sacrifice, brotherly feeling, charity and coöperation. It has made money-making the sole end and aim of life, and competition, fair or foul, the means to attain it. In short it is soul-blindness that has given rise to the individualistic egoism of modern civilization.

That this mode of life is productive of endless evils and subversive of the order and stability of society is amply proved by the present condition of civilized humanity. Never was poverty so great a curse as it is now. Never was there a

society in which millions of half naked and half starved paupers abounded and a few millionaires cunningly hoarded up immense wealth. At no period in the history of the human race have we had so much friction among the several classes of society, so much envy, so great a selfishness and greed, and so thorough a blindness to the true interest of the individual or the nation as in our own. Life now is all excitement and struggle. The so-called winners in the game of life, after all their weary pursuit of the pleasures of this world at the expense of their brethren, find themselves face to face with the inevitable last destiny that awaits all. They then find in themselves no peace of mind and no hope. Their lives have been no preparation to meet death. They fear the terrible doom. They do not know what it is or what it leads to. The thought of separation from friends, wife and children and from what has been all along dearly cherished, makes death and its feared consequences still more terrible. Such is a typical picture of the last moments of an average modern man.

What a contrast this is to the state of tranquillity and perfect peace in the mind of an ancient Brahman or even a modern *Sannyasin* (a holy man) in his hour of death! The life of an ancient Brahman was throughout a preparation for that "inevitable hour" and for the life beyond. He was trying all through life to lessen his attachments to things of this world. He knew that life on earth was full of miseries and the pleasures it could afford were all only ephemeral. He fully realized that he was not the body, but a spirit eternal and divine. His philosophy taught him how to get at least a partial glimpse while living here of that blissful life beyond. It also taught him how best to meet death with a cheerful face and without feeling any pangs of heart. He worked for the world, not to increase so much the store of

human pleasures, as for the joint welfare of his own soul and that of others. But he did not underrate the importance of the body. He used it as an instrument for the attainment of his higher spiritual end. He never set any value on luxuries, which modern men in their soul-blindness have so absurdly raised to the rank of the necessaries of life. What is the reason of this wide diversity between the ancient life and the modern? And what is the reason of their being now two directly antagonistic ideals for man to follow? The reason is not far to seek. It lies in the fact that the ancient Brahman knew well that he had a soul, while the modern man considers himself soulless. The former elevated man to the dignity of a god and the latter degrades him to the level of a brute. If the question whether man has soul is put to a modern man of science, he invariably answers: "No. There is no scientific evidence to prove it. We have dissected the human frame and examined most minutely and with the greatest care all its component parts; and we have not been able to discover a soul even with the aid of our best microscopes magnifying hundreds of diameters. Moreover why should we assume the existence of an unknown thing as soul? We can very easily explain all the complex phenomena of the mind by brain cells and their vibrations and the laws of association and co-ordination." This is the position of the extremists among our present-day scientists, while the more moderate among them are seen to be contented with the reply: "We do not know. It is a mystery, an insoluble mystery."

Such a denial of soul in man, in the words of Masson, is "a needless audacity of the human mind; a braggartism of negation, where negation is intrinsically absurd and silence would answer all practical purposes." If any man is unable to see a soul in the body, it is no wonder. It cannot be seen,

for it is invisible. It cannot be known, for it is the knower. How can the knower be known with a vision directed to things external? How can the soul be known as an object of consciousness, while it is the knowing subject, unless the trained power of cognition is directed inwards to it? How can soul be measured in terms of matter? It is impossible. Our faculty of external vision cannot cognize it. The faculty of introvision must be cultivated for that purpose. So long as this is not developed, there can be no conclusive evidence to prove the existence of the soul or its nature. This faculty our ancients called *Yoga-drishti* or *Divya-chakshu*—the divine sight—which alone can give us a real knowledge of God, of soul and of the universe.

Even for those who have not developed this faculty evidence is not wanting to show the existence of the soul. It is all summed up in the following verse from the *Atmasiddhi* of the sage Yamanacharya, the worthy preceptor of Sri Ramanuja and one of the greatest Vedantins of Southern India: "The existence of soul is self-evident. It can be proved also by inference and the Scriptures; but is directly perceived only by him who has practised the exercises of Yoga (various spiritual methods leading to God-union)." Direct perception is attained only when the internal vision is developed after a long practice of Yoga. It is exercise alone that strengthens a faculty and it is no wonder therefore that this faculty, atrophied in almost all of us, can be brought into play only after life-long practice in the field of Yoga. But have we not the other evidences mentioned in the foregoing verse to prove to us the existence of soul? Leaving out the Scriptures, which some modern minds may not be disposed to accept as an evidence, let us examine the other two.

The self-evident nature of the existence of the soul is

seen from the following facts. No man can deny his own existence; and everyone feels himself to be something which he calls "I," to which he refers all his sensations, thoughts and emotions and but for which they would all be absolutely meaningless to him. Let a man examine his own mind and see if he does not feel himself to be different from the body, which itself is felt to be external. The "I" is unfolded in every act of consciousness and is felt to be an unchanging and unchangeable something in the midst of feelings, volitions and thoughts which are always changing. It is not felt to be of the nature of matter, nor is it felt to be of the nature of thought, feeling or volition. It is evidently incapable of any psychological analysis. It is the *psyche* pure and simple, the *pramatri* of Sanskrit philosophy, standing above the reach of all instruments of evidence. It is the highest reality that makes every state of consciousness what it is, and without which all else must become non-existence. If this is no reality, what then is reality for us? If it be supposed that the "I," divested of all the accidental associations of name and form, is an illusion, what is it that supposes it to be an illusion? What is it that feels this surmise to be correct? The answer must be this "I" again, this ever-recurring something which will never disappear so long as thought exists.

Let us then examine by the method of inference to what mysterious principle this word "I" refers. It cannot be to the body; for in spite of the changes in the body,—the loss of limbs, etc., it persists changeless and seems indivisible. It neither decreases nor increases however much the body may change, or however much the contents of one's knowledge may increase or decrease. We have remembrances of the past, experiences of the present and expectations of the future. But the "I" is the same indivisible something, some-

how related to all these, but persisting through all times unchanged. Even in sleep we have reason to conclude that self-consciousness continues, but only deprived of the associations of name and form. That sleep causes no break in the chain of self-consciousness can be inferred from our memory in the waking state, which comes to us in the form, "I slept well last night." How can this piece of memory exist or how can there be memory at all, if sleep were not an experience of the knower but a cessation of self? What else is there that can bridge this chasm, if sleep be supposed to be a cessation of self-consciousness? Such reasoning proves almost conclusively the existence of soul, which is unchanging and unanalysable. Hence the ancients called it a spiritual atom or monad (*anu*). If this be granted, then its eternity is also proved. Death can mean only a change in the composition of a body. Who can conceive the death or annihilation of that something which has been proved to be unanalysable or atomic? Can our scientists conceive the change or annihilation of a chemical atom, granting at the same time that it is an ultimate particle incapable of analysis into anything simpler? Hence the soul, being a monad of consciousness, unanalysable and atomic, the very thought of its destruction is inconceivable and self-contradictory.

These among others are the reasons that our ancient Rishis (Seers) adduce to prove the existence of a permanent soul in man. However, for those who are willing to follow their Yoga methods and practices, they offer more direct and conclusive evidence to demonstrate the existence of the soul and its capabilities. These things are condemned unheard in our age. The present generation, in its intellectual vanity and mad rush into the whirlpool of pleasure, is only too ready to pooh-pooh everything ancient which does not dovetail with its own purposes and its own theories and dogmas

of life. "To the eye of vulgar logic what is man? An omnivorous biped that wears breeches. To the eye of pure reason what is he? A soul, a spirit, a divine apparition." Such is Carlyle's conclusion on the subject.

THEY DREAMED

O, they dreamed in the East that the soul of a man
Could burn and glow, as the ages ran;
Could flame like a torch, and soar like a star
Till it pierced all innermost depths that are,
Till it made the dizziest heights its own,
And God and the soul were one.

O, they dreamed in the West that the soul of a man
Could flow like a stream, through the ages' span,
Forever seeking the living sea,
Seeking forever for Deity,
Till it found the goal for which it strove,
Till it found the Heart of Love.

But a dream is a dream and dim at the best,
And a dream is a dream, in the East or the West.

Rise up, my soul, rise up anew,
Ah, what if this dream be true!

H. P. K.

As a goldsmith, taking a piece of gold turns it into another, newer and more beautiful shape, so does this soul, after having thrown off this body and dispelled all ignorance, make unto itself another, newer and more beautiful shape. And as the slough of a snake lies on an ant-hill, dead and cast away, thus lies this body; but that disembodied immortal spirit is Self-effulgent and one with the Absolute.

—*Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad.*

REBIRTH AND EVOLUTION

By Swami Paramananda

The complex nature of our existence always demands explanation and in seeking to find it, man has been led to investigate both the physical and spiritual realms, for the study of life is the most interesting of all study. The very fact that we exist makes us want to understand the process of life:—how and whence we have come into existence and what happens after death. The discovery of the theory of evolution by modern science led many to believe that it would solve the whole problem of life. But the theory as presented in the West does not offer the explanation we require. Western scientists say that the natural struggle for existence must lead every germ of life to progress and that it cannot stop evolving until it has developed the power to resist all difficulties; that, by the law of the survival of the fittest, wherever there is a necessity of escaping from greater forces, the lesser forces are striving to acquire greater power; hence every living thing, from the minutest insect up, is constantly compelled by its inherent nature to try to evolve its life-force. They also attempt to show how the body evolves through the lower stages and continues to evolve until it is perfected. But the explanation of modern physical evolution can never fully satisfy us, for it does not account for the higher planes of manifestation.

This, however, is not the case with the ancient evolutionists of India, like Kapila, who lived in the seventh century B. C. and who extended his conception beyond the physical to moral and spiritual evolution. These early Seers realized that there can be no evolution without involution. The fact that something cannot come out of nothing, as modern science also affirms, proves that involution must precede evolution. The relation, indeed, between evolution and in-

volution is as inseparable as between cause and effect; and just as to understand the effect we must know the cause, so to understand our present state of evolution we must know all that has gone before; for what we call our mental and physical inheritances are not matters of chance, but the direct outcome of our past. The wise ones who have been brave and strong enough to lift the veil, know that this life cannot be explained until we connect it with a previous existence and that the future existence will find its explanation in the present one; for the law of life is nothing but the process of evolution. When we grasp this, we are able to comprehend more clearly the diversity and inequality apparent everywhere. Why are not all men alike? Does an All-mighty, All-merciful Lord create one happy and another miserable? What brings the distinction? There must be some cause, for there can be no effect without a cause, and the inequalities in outer condition and mental power among human beings are effects of causes which lie imbedded in the character of each individual.

The gross body is not all. There is another known as the subtle body, which is composed of finer and less destructible material. This subtle body consists of mind, intellect and the sense of "I." In it are stored up all the impressions gathered through our different lives. Only by knowing this subtler part of man, wherein dwells the individuality, can we gain insight into the course of his evolution, and understand why his life varies from every other. We create for ourselves these differences, either consciously or unconsciously. Our destiny is not governed, as we imagine, by a supernatural power. The happiness and misery which we experience here are not forced upon us by an arbitrary Providence, but are the inevitable result of our own thoughts and deeds. We must reap what we have sown. No one can give

us what we do not deserve, nor can any one keep from us the blessing we have earned. We ourselves have the power to make and unmake our destiny. Therefore if we are born with certain defects in our character, if we are placed in an unhappy environment, although these are due to our own past errors, such conditions are by no means unalterable, but can be counteracted by our present mode of living. When, however, a person dies without completing his task in life, with his goal unattained, is everything ended for him? Has he no further chance? Sri Krishna answers in the Bhagavad-Gita: "There is no loss for him either here or hereafter; for he who doeth good never attaineth an evil condition. In his new birth he regaineth the knowledge acquired in his former incarnations and striveth again for his end. He is irresistibly led by his previous tendencies. Thus purified by many births and rebirths, he reacheth the Supreme Goal."

Now the question naturally arises: If we existed before, why is it that we do not remember? We do not recall many things that took place in our childhood, yet we cannot say that we did not exist then. Our memory is not in its pure state, our mind at present is not collected or focussed enough to penetrate the past, therefore our knowledge is limited and our recollection vague. Also the power of memory varies. There are some people who can recall even the smallest detail of their childhood; and there are others who do not remember what happened a year ago, or even yesterday. This shows how minds differ. The memory, however, can be purified, as we find in the lives of the Great Ones. Buddha, for instance, remembered his past; and many Yogis who lead lives of contemplation and absolute purity also are able to know their previous births, for the mind becomes like a crystal and reflects everything clearly. Mind is the cause of our bondage and mind is the cause of our freedom. It is the unfulfilled

desires of the mind which impel us to seek embodiment in order to satisfy them. Desires are like the seeds of new births and the character of those desires shapes our future. We read in the Gita: "Whatever state of being a man dwelleth upon at the time of leaving the body, that verily he attaineth." In other words he attains the condition he has most constantly held in his thought through this life-time. This means that a man cannot gain anything other than what he has created for himself by his habits of mind. He may wish to have something else, but his own nature, formed by his voluntary or involuntary thoughts and deeds, will impel him to move in a certain direction. If we wish to change our present course, we must cultivate such habits of thought as will counteract the past and carry us in a new direction.

What do we really want? Do we want things which are temporary or things which are lasting? Can we be satisfied to go on through this round of birth and death, finding little gratifications for this one span of life, identifying ourselves with mere bodily existence, seeking nothing beyond? If we long for something else, we must work for it. We must unfold all our latent powers. We must learn to know our true nature. Through moral evolution alone man can attain his freedom. We can gain material blessings by striving for material things; for whatever a man constantly thinks of and works for, he gains. But until he can unfold his moral and spiritual nature, that nature within him which is mighty, imperishable, he cannot be free. Life is indestructible. All the great philosophers and sages recognize that life has not its rising and setting in this one small existence. It has been and will be. The fullness of evolution could not be reached during one embodiment, for the time is not long enough. The soul has not finished its experience; it has not gathered all the knowledge it requires and therefore it must return

to gather more. "Why should I not come back as often as I am capable of acquiring fresh knowledge, fresh experience? Do I bring away so much from once that there is nothing to repay the trouble of coming back?" the great German writer Lessing exclaims. And Huxley says: "Like the doctrine of evolution itself, that of transmigration has its roots in the realm of reality. None but hasty thinkers will reject it on the ground of inherent absurdity."

The doctrine of evolution and reincarnation explains the law of life; and when we understand it, we have no feeling of bitterness towards our present conditions. A rebellious spirit will never help us escape from suffering and ignorance; only work, work with understanding can free us. When we learn to mould this life of ours wisely, then we regard it as a privilege and a blessing to possess it, because through it we can manifest the glory of Godhood. This is the purpose of evolution. Every germ of life is descended from the Almighty and every germ must ultimately attain union with its Source. Most people are at present making the journey unconsciously, fettered by many desires which can never be satisfied. To try to fulfill them is like adding fuel to fire. At every step we must use discrimination. We must question what we want and what can give us what we want. We must also bear in mind that this life of ours is not a matter of accident; that it is not so temporary or so limited as we imagine; but that it is everlasting.

Faith in the eternity of our existence will lift us above the plane of physical consciousness to a plane where we shall gain the power to live our lives nobly and fulfill all our duties wisely. Man does not fear to live when he understands what life is. He does not wish to run away then, for who runs away from life? Do you suppose that people who commit suicide do so because they do not love life? No.

It is the bondage, the igorance, the miseries of life from which they wish to escape; but they take the wrong road. They destroy the instrument with which they might unfold their nature and gain that which would bring them what their soul is really craving. No living being hates life or wishes to escape from it. It is from death we want to escape; and this last enemy, death, can never be overcome until we have evolved our spiritual nature, the nature which is undying, free and complete. Infinity has no lack; and when limited man finds his unlimited nature—that which is part of God, then he casts off all bondage and transcends the realm of death.

The idea of reincarnation takes from us all sense of impatience and injustice, because it shows that we are not put here arbitrarily, with only a few years in which to do all that we have to do; but that we shall be given other opportunities to work out our desires and find fullness of life; that what we have left unfinished we shall have another chance to finish. The majority of people, who live under slavery to their lower desires, have no choice as to the environment and conditions of their new birth. They have created a chain, a weight which holds them down; but it is a self-created fetter, which they themselves can break by purifying their desires and elevating their thoughts.

Every mortal must be awakened some day or other to his spiritual nature. It may come gradually through the natural process of evolution, or suddenly through disappointment and suffering. Therefore we must not imagine that all the suffering we see in human life is a curse. Great blessings sometimes come through pain or grief, and a man who understands the law does not cry out against his fate. He lives here with serenity. He knows that nothing happens without a definite purpose; that the experiences of pleasure

and pain, of success or failure, which a man undergoes, all help him to evolve his higher nature and lead him to ultimate perfection. Therefore let each one of us live his life consciously and cheerfully. Let us never give way to despair or look upon this life as a burden. Let us work with perseverance and undepressed heart until we realize that for our true Self there is no death, but that this life of ours is a part of the Infinite, Indestructible and All-pervading Life.

All our life, from birth to death, is it not with all its dreams, itself a dream? Does not our belief in its reality spring solely and entirely from our ignorance of a life more real?—*Count Leo Tolstoi.*

VILWAMANGAL THE SAINT

Fragment of Drama by Girish Chunder Ghosh

Rendered from The Bengalee specially for the "Message of the East."
(Continued from January number.)

Act III. Scene I.

A Roadway. Vilwamangal and Somagiri, a monk, enter.

Somagiri.—You are a stranger, I presume. You appear to me a man of renunciation. If you have not already found a lodging for the night, I shall deem it a privilege to have you come with me.

Vilwamangal.—O holy man, can you tell me who is my own? I find no one in the world whom I can call my own! Tell me, tell me who is mine.

Somagiri.—You are a great soul, mad with Divine Love. I salute you humbly.

Vilwamangal.—Whoever you may be, I am a wicked wretch. Do not salute me. I bow down at your feet. (*To himself*) Alas! Empty is my heart. Thou who art mine own, come and fill this heart of mine. Such darkness dense!

In the cage of this body no longer can my life endure. Despair! Despair! Alone am I in this wilderness of the world! Who am I? Why came I here? Why this apathy? What is it that my soul yearns for? Thou all-loving one, who and where art thou? Great is my longing to give my love to thee.

Somagiri.—You are fortunate. The Blessed Radha has filled you with true devotion. The love of Krishna, the Lord, has been born in you.

Vilwamangal.—You are my Master. Who is the Blessed Radha? Tell me.

Somagiri.—Master! The Lord alone is that. There is no other Master.

Vilwamangal.—Who is the Blessed Radha? Tell me.

Somagiri.—I have seen the image of Radha-Krishna, but I have never been able to fathom its glory. If you have also seen one, then meditate on it and perhaps you can understand its meaning.

Vilwamangal (*meditating*).—Ah! True! Until now it escaped my sight. True, it is most beautiful. Can one perceive the reality behind this image? Can one really obtain this blessed vision?

Somagiri.—Everything is possible through His grace.

Vilwamangal.—Where can I see Him?

Somagiri.—Call on Him. He will tell you where you can see Him.

Vilwamangal.—Who are you? Why this stirring of hope in my dead heart? Blessed Master, grant me shelter at your feet.

Somagiri.—Do not be anxious. The Blessed Lord has already given you shelter. Come and this day fulfill my heart's desire.

Vilwamangal.—Now that I have found you, do not cast

me off. I shall never leave you. You have infused new hope in my burned-out heart. If this hope attains fulfillment, it will be through your grace.

(*They go out together.*)

Scene II.

Before Chintamani's house. Chintamani and her maid-servant enter.

Maid-servant.—I say, mistress, it is plain that you're in love! I do not reproach you for loving; but this is too much—not eating, not bathing, sitting all day and night grieving. Suppose he (Vilwamangal) has gone away? What matters it? Besides, where will he go in his anger? A man may stay away perhaps ten days, or fifteen or at most a month.

Chintamani.—He will never come back.

Maid-servant.—Hm! Of course he won't come then! There's no doubt that when you get angry, you lose all your senses and say whatever comes into your mind. He's a clever man, so he's just keeping away for a couple of days.

Chintamani.—You do not know him. He had no thought except of me. Now that he has stayed away three days, I am sure he has gone.

Maid-servant.—Well! If he's gone away, that's no reason why you shouldn't take care of yourself.

Chintamani.—Ah! He gave up everything for me. Now I have driven him from his home.

Maid-servant.—Why should he leave his comfortable home and go away? Oh! you don't understand—it is only a man's coquetry.

Chintamani.—If he had been merely angry, he would have remained in his own house. But I have heard that the spirit of renunciation sometimes awakens suddenly in the heart; this must be that.

Maid-servant.—Oh! You think he has renounced every-

thing, do you? (*Laughing sarcastically*) Lots of men do that!

Chintamani.—Today my eyes are opened. Love was, I thought, a word; but not so. True love does exist. I never spoke a gentle word to him. Often when in anger I locked my door and went to bed, he spent the whole night on the roof outside and never even called me once lest he disturb my sleep! If I perchance shed angry tears, countless more were the tears that streamed from his weeping eyes. From all this I realize today that he was truly mine. Yet I cast him off! Now I know that I have no one to call my own.

Maid-servant.—Don't say you have no one, no one. The Lord is there, why worry?

Chintamani.—Will God be merciful towards a sinner such as I? Yet I have heard that He is All-loving. But I am only a heartless dancing-girl. Never have I known how to give or take love. Even if I should obtain God's mercy, I would not know how to keep it. But, Thaki, the memory of my childhood comes up before me. Was I like this always? Or have I become blackened by constant burning? I had many high ambitions in my heart, where are they all today? I have made many suffer; but, God, have I not suffered too? Yes, I have suffered much. Yet never have I felt before pangs such as I now feel for Vilwamangal. He looked upon me as his all-in-all; but he found in me a deadly serpent! He knows love—he will receive the mercy of the All-loving Lord. My heart is like a barren desert and will remain a desert.

Maid-servant.—You go to extremes in everything. If Vilwamangal has gone, then let him go. I can't bear any more!

(*Pagalini, a religious mendicant, enters.*)

Pagalini.—Mother, do not be anxious. God will be merciful to you. He blesses all! (*She sings a hymn.*)

Chintamani.—Mother, who are you? What are you saying? As I listen to your words, I quiver from head to foot. Who are you, Mother?

Pagalini.—I am your daughter, Mother. You are mad and mad, too, is your daughter.

Chintamani.—Oh! my hard heart, why art thou trembling thus today? Listening to another's words, I have never known thee to tremble like this before. O mind! what is this new deceit of thine? (*To herself*) Thou art only a dancing-girl, fond of silken cloths and jewels; yet today thou longest to be like unto this mad woman, stripped of all gems and clothed in rags. Why hast thou been so false? Why so much deception? For whose sake hast thou earned money? For whose sake hast thou hoarded gold and jewels? What new lesson, mind, art thou giving me? Who is not thine will never be thine. This lesson thou hast always known, O mind! The past is gone and never canst thou recall it. (*Aloud*) Who are you, Pagalini?

Pagalini.—Mother, I must go now. The day is ending.

Chintamani.—You are my daughter, Mother; let me put on you these jewels. (*She takes off all her jewels and puts them on Pagalini.*)

Pagalini.—Very well, Mother, give them to me.

(*She goes out.*)

Maid-servant.—She's going away!

Chintamani.—Let her go. Come, let us go into the house.

(*Chintamani leaves.*)

Maid-servant.—Alas! My mistress has gone mad.

Scene III.

On the riverbank. Somagiri and a disciple enter.

Somagiri.—Let us start for Vrindavana today.

Disciple.—Master, where is the great soul whom you came to see? Where is he?

Somagiri.—I have been blessed by the sight of him. Have you not seen him?

Disciple.—Where, Master? I have not seen him.

Somagiri.—Why, haven't you seen Vilwamangal?

Disciple.—What? Surely you did not come to see that profligate? His renunciation is all because of a dancing-girl. Who can say how long it will last?

Somagiri.—Lust and greed, one delusion in two forms, binding men in iron fetters! Go, my son, from door to door and see how many in this world, abandoning lust and greed, are seeking God. He is a great soul indeed who breaks these fetters, who leaving behind him wealth and pleasure, strives for the Absolute alone. Full of unselfish love was Vilwamangal's heart. For true love's sake he cherished that dancing-girl. But fruitless was it all, for how could so small a vessel hold so great a love? This lofty, love-maddened soul, desiring now God's love, has trampled under foot the vanities of this world. Intense is his spirit of renunciation. Well-nigh madness is it! He now calls on God with perfect singleness of heart.

Disciple.—Master, doubt still lingers in my mind. Tell me graciously, why is he so much esteemed? Thousands of *Sannyasins* (monks), giving up wealth and pleasure, are wandering about. Why have they not the same glory?

Somagiri.—My son, you do not know, you do not know. Subtle is the play of *Maya*. Some in order to hoard money, assume renunciation; some do it to gain honor; others to gain power; but true, selfless love is very rare. Behold, this great soul has desire for nothing. He has surrendered his whole life at the Lord's feet. No longer is he conscious of honor or dishonor, of pain or pleasure. He knows not even why he seeks God. Such love is indeed rare and precious. The man who for the sake of a mere dancing-girl could embrace a

dead body and clutch a venomous serpent, what can he not do for the sake of God?

Disciple.—Strange is this! I cannot understand it. When you left the city of Benares, Master, saying that you were going to see a holy man, Vilwamangal was still bound to the dancing-girl. Then disappointment caused his sudden renunciation. How long will it last? Tell me, Master, what will be the outcome of it all?

Somagiri.—Nothing is known to me. God alone is All-knowing. Through His law was this tie between soul and soul. Crossing the river they met. The heart alone can comprehend such longing. To the worldly-minded it is incomprehensible. There are some who only learn by passing through great suffering. By the grace of God I have found in this life that falsehood never rises in a selfless heart; and suddenly it rose within me that a great saint of Bengal would once more reveal to the people the glory of the Lord. This is what came in my heart, whether true or false. Now you understand, my son.

Disciple.—Lord, I am your disciple and you are my master! But why so much honor given to him (Vilwamangal)?

Somagiri.—Who is Master and who disciple? God is the Eternal Master of every living being.

Disciple.—Why then this relation of master and disciple?

Somagiri.—This world is the abode of doubt. The All-pervading One is not visible to the senses. As man argues and disputes regarding God, the cloud of doubt covers more and more his mind. But the thirst for God makes the heart burn to find a way to fulfill its yearning. The Lord being merciful to such a soul, helps him attain his goal. Suddenly one comes, listening to whose words, new hope and faith rise in the disciple's heart; and he regards those words as the words of God. This one becomes his instrumental Guru (spir-

itual master). Believing in his words, the disciple attains union with the Master of the Universe. For this humble purpose I am here. Faith alone gives God. But listen, I am not Vilwamangal's master, rather is he mine. He is a great soul and a great devotee. I am without true devotion. I know not when I shall possess it. Come, my son.

(To be continued.)

Even if the most wicked worships me with undivided devotion, he should be regarded as good, for he has formed a holy resolution. Quickly he becomes a righteous soul and attains to peace eternal. Know thou that my devotees never perish.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

REPORTS

The first three months of the new year have brought great encouragement in the work of the Vedanta Centre of Boston. People are showing deeper and deeper appreciation of the blessing of the new home with its beautiful surroundings and peaceful atmosphere. Increased interest in the teaching is also manifest in the growth of the attendance at the Sunday Services. At some of the lectures the seating capacity of the new Chapel has already been taxed to its utmost and every week brings a number of strangers to the Centre. Not merely in Boston, however, is the interest spreading; but from far-distant and unexpected points are coming constant demands for circulars, book lists and sample copies of "The Message of the East," showing that the general public is awakening more and more to the practical value of the Vedanta teaching.

The schedule of meetings at the Centre will remain the same until June 1st. The only change will be in the hour of the Sunday Vesper Service, which after April 1st will be at 5 o'clock instead of at 4.

The Vedanta Centre of Boston recently had the pleasure of entertaining the eminent Indian scientist, Dr. Bose, with Mrs. Bose and the well-known Bengali scholar, Professor B. K. Sarkar, author of a number of important books, which he has since generously presented to the Library of the Centre.

Sister Devamata began a course of lectures in Washington on March 19th. Besides bi-weekly classes she will deliver in all four Sunday lectures on "India's Message to the World," "Power of Non-resistance," "Pre-existence and Immortality" and "Meditation and Realization."

* * *

News from India travels slowly at the present time and we have only recently received reports of the celebration of the fifty-third anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's birth. It was observed with great enthusiasm at all the various branches of the Ramakrishna Mission. Religious services, public lectures and the feeding of thousands of poor people filled the day. No heart ever felt for the down-trodden and afflicted as did Swami Vivekananda's. Humble, loving service was a dominant note in all his teaching, and those who love and cherish his memory feel that in no truer way can they honor him than by making the day one of rejoicing for the hungry and unfortunate. The members of the Ramakrishna Math (monastery) at Madras fed 3000 poor; at Bangalore 2000 were given a generous meal, while at the head monastery of the Mission on the Ganges near Calcutta, at Benares, Murshidabad and other Centres many more thousands were fed.

* * *

The members of the Ramakrishna Yoga Ashrama at Koalapara have been laboring silently for some years past to ameliorate the condition of the agricultural population of a section of the Hugli District in Bengal. Through their efforts a primary school was established in 1911 for the poor people of the neighborhood and a charitable dispensary is also distributing medicines to those who otherwise would be unable to have proper help when sickness overtakes them.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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May 2nd	*Heredity and Reincarnation.*
" *9th*	*Resistance and Non-resistance.*
" *16th*	*The Practice of Yoga.*
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" *30th*	*Mukti or Liberation.*

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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Blessed is the man who is possessed of true devotion. He is the happiest of men, because he is free from all anxieties. We are like instruments in the hands of God; when we realize this, all egotism goes. Our daily prayer to God should be: "O Lord, Grant me to know my own nothingness and that Thou art all in all. Help me to realize that I am a mere instrument in Thy hands and that all is done by Thee." When a man comes to understand this, he is truly happy because he knows that his actions are guided by God, who will never misdirect him and never commit a blunder. The man who acts on his own responsibility is sure to commit blunders at every step; but the one who feels that he is only an instrument in God's hands and resigns everything to Him, always acts wisely.

To attain this state, however, one must be steadfast and humble. Humility! Destruction of ego can only be affected by humility. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna used to say that as water flows off from high ground and collects in the low places, so the grace of God runs off from the heart puffed up with vanity and gathers in the hearts of the humble. God's grace flows equally upon all, but the egotist cannot hold it, while the lowly heart receives and retains all the grace that falls into it. Steadiness in devotion means that though you may be busy with many things, still your mind is always

turned toward God. It should be like the needle of a compass; it may swing a little to this side or that, but it always has the tendency to point back to true north.

—Familiar Teachings by Swami Ramakrishnanda.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

O Mother Divine! I want no honor from men, I want no pleasure of the senses; only let my soul flow into Thee as the river Jamuna flows into the Ganges. Mother I am without devotion, without Yoga, I am poor and friendless; I want no one's praise; only let my mind ever dwell on the lotus of Thy feet. *—Sri Ramakrishna.*

As soon as man, by an act of highest Freedom, surrenders and lays aside his personal individual freedom and independence, he becomes a partaker of the only True Being, the Divine, and all the Blessedness that is contained therein.

—Fichte.

A soul well disposed according to God is always of the same mind with God, and whatever it does, it keeps the divinity and splendid brightness that surrounds it always in sight. *—Hierocles.*

Life should be giving birth to the soul, the development of a higher mode of reality. The animal must be humanized; flesh must be made spirit; physiological activity must be transmuted into intellect, and conscience into reason, justice and generosity as the torch is transmuted into life and warmth. The blind, greedy, selfish nature of man must put on beauty and nobleness. This heavenly alchemy is what inspires our presence on earth; it is our mission and glory. *—Amiel.*

Through the years and centuries, through evil agents, through toys and atoms, a great and beneficent tendency irresistibly streams. Let a man learn to look for the permanent

in the mutable and fleeting; let him learn to bear the disappearance of things he was wont to reverence, without losing his reverence; let him learn that he is here, not to work, but to be worked upon; and that, though abyss open under abyss and opinion displace opinion, all are at last contained in the eternal Cause.

—Emerson.

Thou art the Supreme Lord; Thou canst be approached by Thy worshippers only through whole-hearted devotion. Thou art the Primal Cause of the universe, its Protector and Transformer. O All-beautiful One, Refuge of the world! I am powerless, without friends or shelter; I know no guide other than Thyself. Take me under Thy care and protection and save me from the afflictions of the world.

Prayer from the Mahabharata.

I walk before God simply, in faith, with humility, and with love; and I apply myself dilligently to do nothing and to think nothing which may displease Him. I hope that when I have done what I can, He will do with me what He pleases. I have no pain or difficulty about my state, because I have no will but that of God, which I endeavor to accomplish in all things, and to which I am so resigned that I would not take up a straw from the ground against His order, or from any other motive than purely that of love to Him.

—Brother Lawrence.

Love Him! The life from Him alone still flows. Love Him whom saints and prophets all have loved. Through whom alone all have lived and moved. . . . Love's religion comprehends each creed and sect, love flies straight to God and outsoars intellect; if the gem be real, what matters the device? Love in seas of sorrow finds the pearl of price. . . . The treasures of learned men are traces of the pen, the treasures of the Sufi (devotee) are the foot-prints of the saints.

. . . Till thy heart is burning, truth thou wilt not see. Only on the kindled heart dawns certainty.

—*Jalaluddin Rumi (Sufi).*

RECOGNITION AND REALIZATION

Lecture by Sister Devamata.

In all development there are three stages,—the stage of receptive instruction, the stage of reflection, and the stage of realization. First we hear of some fact in the universe; next we think about it, refer it to our past experience, reason as to its validity; and then, if we earnestly desire to know, we push on beyond mere belief in its validity to the actual knowledge of its reality. In material science, we consider it of little value merely to go through the second stage. The scientist who is content to sit in his study and theorize about the laws of chemistry or physics, without seeking practical proof in the laboratory, has little standing among his fellows. It is indeed this which distinguishes the scientific mind from the ordinary mind: the ordinary mind accepts its facts on hearsay; it is satisfied to read about them in the journal or magazine and idly comment on their interest; while the scientific man goes out into the field, takes the flower and studies its structure and nature; or carries the unknown substance into the laboratory, and by analysis finds out its component parts. His constant effort is to pass from the stage of intellectual acceptance to that of conviction. For him it is not enough to recognize the plausibility of a theory; he demands the reality of a proven fact.

The great men in every department of life are those who "prove all things and hold fast to that which is true." We admit this without question in the various branches of secular knowledge; but in matters of religion, curiously enough, it does not occur to us to insist on the same scientific standards.

We consider it quite sufficient that our teachers shall at most attain the second stage,—that of thoughtful recognition of the higher verities regarding God and the soul; while we remain placidly in the first stage of mere hearing about them. Yet exact knowledge is more necessary and imperative in this subtler realm of research than anywhere. We should be more wary of the man who teaches religion without realization than we are of the physicist or chemist who would become an instructor without practical training; for there is more danger in spiritual ignorance than in any other. We recognize that the finer the forces of nature the more hazardous it is to handle them without knowledge. We do not give a child an electric dynamo to play with, nor do we turn even a grown-up person at large in a laboratory full of unfamiliar chemicals. Always the subtle, hidden forces are most dangerous; and the most hidden, the most mighty of all, is the force of spirit. We are dealing with the very finest force of nature when we deal with man's spiritual being; and no one should undertake to direct or handle it who does not fully know its constitution. There is not one of us who walks secure, who is not a menace to himself and to his neighbor, so long as he has not penetrated to the center of his being and discovered what he is; who has not reduced his nature to its component parts and learned the character and use of each part; above all, who has not found That in which he lives and moves and has his being.

What are we at this moment? I remember hearing a great teacher in India say that in our present state we were little better than coolies. As the coolie carries the bricks and mortar, which another lays on the wall, in conformity with the plan of an architect whom neither perhaps has ever seen and whose design they do not know; so once, twice, or thrice in the day we carry food and water and put it into our mouth without any real understanding of the power that impels us.

Why do we do it? Because we feel hunger or thirst; but we cannot tell what force is calling for the food or water. We do not know what is actually done with them when they are taken into the system. A mere description of the digestive process does not cover the whole ground. We cannot voluntarily digest a single morsel of our food; nor do we know how to turn it into the vital forces of the body. Still less do we know how to handle those vital forces when they are generated. We cannot, as the Bible says, add one cubit to our stature; nor can we, when the time comes, add one moment of life to our expiring body.

Actually, we know nothing of our existence. We go on blindly, driven by desires and needs. Whence we have come, whither we are going—these are questions still unanswered. We hear of a heaven and a hell, a *Brahmaloka,* a state of Nirvana, a condition of *Mukti* or liberation; but for us they are mere idle speculations. We claim to believe in a God, yet our daily living proves us atheists; for if we actually believed that there was a God and that He was all that He is defined to be—the storehouse of power, of love, of wisdom, of everlasting happiness—how could we wait so long before seeking Him? Or how could we be content to offer such secondary material benefits as we do to our suffering fellow-men? If we truly love one living creature in the world, or if we merely care for our own welfare, we have but one thing to do—to seek the best; and in God alone shall we find that.

It is time that we woke up and realized that until we strive with all earnestness to transform mere religious validity into religious reality we are both unscientific and uncultured, because all true culture is based on spiritual perception. Nor can we call ourselves lovers of mankind. "What profiteth a man," Christ said, "if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" And what profits a man if he gives the whole

world to his brother and cannot give him his soul? What is of small value to us must be of small value to him. One thing alone in the final analysis is worth giving to the world, and that is soul-consciousness. But how can we give it if we do not possess it? It is not possible. We must find our own life before we can give new life to any living thing. We must find our own soul before we can tell any creature where his soul is and how he may gain it. We have read enough, we have heard enough, we have speculated and talked enough; we have judged other men enough by their creed, their manner of worship, by the name they give to God. The whole problem of religion today is not how to fill the churches; it is not how to convert those who differ from us in belief; it is not how we may give more clothes or food or shelter to the poor; the problem of religion today lies in how we may realize the things about which we have been talking ever since Christ came into the world and other Saviours before Him.

Religion is in realization, not in recognition. How do you know that Christ is a Saviour if you have not tried to be saved by Him? How can you proclaim His redeeming grace to others if you have not proved its efficacy? Has He saved you from anger, from impatience, from ceaseless desires, from envy or discontent, from fear of death, from ignorance? Only when you have tested the power of His teaching in your own life can you know its true value. When you have felt the Christ spirit awakening in you; when you have begun to experience for yourself those things which He showed forth in His life; when, even facing death, you can say as He did in the garden: "Not my will, but Thine," and then go forth unmoved by false accusation, so absolutely surrendered as not to speak a word even in self-defense; when you have been able to live one day as He lived, then you may say that Christ is a Saviour, because He has done something towards saving you.

You have proved His power. And then there will be no need for you to proclaim Him. Your life will do it.

One man who lives Christ, who has seen Christ, who has risen to the Christ state of consciousness, will elevate a whole community. Let such a man stand in any pulpit and there will be no trouble in filling the church. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that when the lotus blooms it does not need to go about searching for the bees; they come of themselves. So when a man speaks with realization, he does not have to seek an audience. His power, his authority, is felt everywhere. He cannot walk through the street that the air is not purer for his passing. He cannot mingle with his fellow-men without stirring in their hearts the desire for higher things. He cannot stay at home in the quietness of his own chapel or study without diffusing a fragrance of holiness all about him, just as the flower blooming in the garden fills the surrounding air with its perfume.

And that is true preaching. That is true religion. That alone is spirituality. Any amount of brilliant speculation, any amount of ability to prove things by argument, to convince men through their intellects, is as nothing. For that reason sometimes the work of a simple man in the Salvation Army may be greater than that done by the most scholarly minister in his pulpit; because in the one case the heart is quickened, while in the other only the intellect is stimulated. And it is through the heart that God will be known. A man may spend a life-time studying and thinking about Him, but his mind will remain as dark and cold as a hearth where no fire burns. Only when the heart begins to stir—not in any foolish, sentimental emotion, but with intense yearning for the Supreme, only then will He be perceived. There is none so difficult to touch spiritually as the scholar; for "He who thinks he knows, knows it not," so the Upanishad declares. It is in the manger

of the simple, humble heart that the Christ is born. The man who thinks to find God through the printed page will never find Him. The man who thinks to reach God through argument and dispute will never hear His Voice. He will only hear the voices of men, and most of all his own. But the man who seeks God in the silent depths of his being, who listens for the still, small voice in the heart, that man sees God, that man hears Him, that man lives with Him.

The greatest things are always accomplished in the realm of feeling. That is why the Psalmist cried out: "I will feel after God, if haply I may find Him." We may think after Him forever and we shall not reach Him, for intellectual recognition alone is the fruit of thinking. The heart is the seat of the highest consciousness. The subconscious mind, so the great Vedic psychologists discovered, resides in all the nerve ganglia of the body; the conscious mind has the brain for its seat and instrument; while the superconscious faculties are resident in the heart. At the time of deepest meditation the whole activity is focussed there; hence we read again in the Psalms: "Let the meditations of my heart be acceptable to Thee, O Lord." Also, it is said in the Maitrayana-Brahmana-Upanishad: "When a man, having freed his mind from sloth, distraction and vacillation, becomes as it were delivered from his mind, that is the highest point. The mind must be restrained in the heart until its activities come to an end; that is knowledge, that is liberty." The preliminary processes,—concentration, discrimination, choice, take place in the head; but as the spiritual vision plunges deeper, ordinary intellection ceases, and a great fire kindles in the heart by the rising flame of which one apprehends clearly and directly all the ultimate verities of existence.

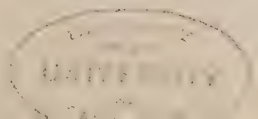
Every living being is equipped to attain this state of vision. Not one can excuse himself on the ground of disability. In

each life-germ is involved all the faculties necessary to perceive every truth regarding God and His universe; but by the faculties of one plane we cannot apprehend the truths of another. It is because even the most earnest seekers sometimes do not take account of this fact that, after vain efforts to know God through the intellect, they declare Him to be unknown and unknowable. It is easy for us to see that our bodily sense-organs, the fruit of our subconscious evolution, cannot reveal to us the higher truths of reason. To discern these, we must develop a new set of intellectual faculties. By the same law, mind or intellect cannot perceive the things of the Divine realm; for that again we must evolve spiritual faculties. Sri Krishna indicates this in the Bhagavad-Gita when, referring to His own Divine Nature, He says to Arjuna: "But Thou canst not see Me with these eyes of Thine; behold I give thee Divine sight."

The process, however, by which each new set of faculties is unfolded remains the same through the whole gamut of consciousness. As it was the desire to perceive objects or forces impinging on the surface of the primitive body worn by the individual life-germ or soul in the early stages of its manifestation, which impelled it to evolve eyes, ears, olfactory nerves and all the senses; as again in the human form it has been the desire to perceive and master the subtler laws and principles playing on his life and mind and character which has led that same individual to develop his higher intellectual organs; so will it be an irresistible yearning to understand the subtlest forces of the Universe which will bring about the evolution of his highest faculties, those of the spirit. But although the motive-cause throughout the journey remains the same, the direction taken is gradually reversed. In the first stage, all the disturbing stimuli being external, the life-germ moves outward and concentrates its whole activity in an

effort to pierce various channels of communication with the external world. In the second stage the activity alternates; a disturbance outside sets up a corresponding disturbance in the inner, mental realm; and man moves first outward, then inward, trying by alternating processes of observation and reflection, of experiment and deduction, to relate and co-ordinate the facts of both realms. In the final stage, however, the disturbing, impinging stimuli are all inner. A nameless, insatiable hunger of mind and heart, grief, disappointment, a thirst for Truth: these are the forces beating upon man's deepening consciousness. In order to perceive and understand their causes, he must turn, and with the same energy he once spent in piercing the sense channels outward, he must now cut new channels inward to the core of his being, where at last he will stand face to face with the Ultimate Reality and know the Final Cause of all things. Then his task of evolution will be finished. Whatever work he does thenceforth will be a free offering to the world. But until that point is reached, through all his activities, however philanthropic or humanitarian, he is only learning lessons which in the cosmic economy are also used to bring benefit to others—like a pupil who teaches while he studies in order to earn his tuition or ground himself in his subject.

The task is a mighty one and it cannot be undertaken in any haphazard or half-hearted way. We must set our whole will and desire towards it. We must be as eager for the Ultimate Truth, for that Truth which will make us free, as a Darwin or a Newton for a new revelation of natural law. We must be willing to cleanse and prepare our body, mind and heart with as great patience as Herschel showed when during long hours he walked round and round, polishing the great lens with which he hoped to gain a clearer vision of the heavens. We must make space in our daily routine for our



spiritual pursuits, as every lover of learning creates hours for study. How many of our great scientists and scholars were forced in early years to maintain themselves by some uncongenial work, while they advanced along the line of their real vocation by jealously utilizing their leisure. If we with equal singleness devote our idle hours to the training of our higher faculties, we shall attain as much. We must feel that our spiritual practice is as vital to our life and health as our food or bath, and must be carried on with the same unquestioned regularity. We do not consider ourselves selfish or unmindful of the demands of others if we take time to cleanse and nourish the body; should the soul, too, not receive its share of care? When the yearning is keen enough, time and opportunity will not be lacking, for God is pressing on us from all sides. Every grief or failure is His call to turn from the unreal to the Real; every joy or triumph is a reminder that He is there. That Supreme Power which has driven us on from the polyp to the man is still impelling us, and will never let us rest until we realize our Godhood. Shall we hold back, clinging to our present unfinished state; or shall we yield ourselves up to that great, on-pushing Divine Energy? If we go with It, what is our reward? Supreme vision, Supreme bliss, an illumined comprehension of all things.

Actually all men are coveting the Real—real pleasure, real beauty, real strength, real love, but they seek it where it cannot be found; for every relative object, although seeming for the moment real in comparison with some lower and more fleeting one, proves unreal when placed beside a higher form of joy or beauty. Hence our constant change and search for something more satisfying, more enduring. Our present partial knowledge is like a twilight in which shadows appear realities, real things like shadows. At every step we seem to stand at dim crossroads, not knowing which to take. It is

this perpetual uncertainty and indecision, this sense of unknowingness, which makes life so burdensome. Yet it cannot be otherwise so long as we walk in ignorance; for ignorance alone, not outward conditions, is the cause of all our misery, our doubt and discontent. How tiresome is a machine shop to the uncomprehending man! Here and there he may find something to amuse him for a moment; but the whirling of the wheels, the plunging of the pistons, the creaking of the chains and belts soon confuse his mind. The noise deafens him, the odor of hot oil sickens him, the sight of over-heated, toiling men distresses him, and he hastens to escape into the quiet coolness outside. But let a trained mechanic enter, and at once he is quivering with eager interest and enjoyment. He understands the meaning and value of every wheel and piston; he marvels at the inventive genius manifest in each small adjustment; he stands hour after hour watching the throb and movement of the mighty mechanism without thought of fatigue; and he comes away full of new enthusiasm and inspiration. So with us. As long as we look upon this great machine of the universe in ignorance, we shall be conscious of the noise, the danger, the toil and drudgery, the ceaseless revolution, the unsightliness of half-made objects, of disconnected parts, and we shall criticize, complain, and doubt. Let us, however, begin to understand the laws and principles operating beneath it all, soon our complainings and criticisms will turn to wondering admiration for the order and beauty manifesting everywhere. When, in the ultimate realization, we view the whole from that central point, the Final Cause, then we shall behold a new heaven and a new earth, in which the Real shines resplendent behind every form; and our one prayer will be: "O Thou Supreme Light of the Universe, lead all men from the unreal to the Real, from the darkness of ignorance to the effulgent light of knowledge, that

they may behold Thy glory and enjoy lasting peace and happiness."

SACRED SONGS

By Rabindra Nath Tagore.

(Translated from The Bengali especially for "The Message of the East.")

I.

Thou art my Friend, Thou art my Lord, Thou art mine day and night.
Thou art my Joy, Thou art my Peace, a sea of nectar art Thou.
Thou art indeed my Abode of bliss. Thou soothest my heart and destroyest all grief.
Thy feet take away all my sorrow; a boundless refuge are they for the lowly.

II.

To Thee shall I unfold the hope of my heart:
In happiness, misery and sorrow, in darkness and light, ever shall my gaze be fixed on Thy feet.

Why Thou hast sent me into this world, Thou alone knowest, O my Lord.
At Thy command I shall stay in this land; joy and sorrow, whatever Thou givest, that will I bear.

If in this wilderness I lose my way,
I shall call on Thy Name, O Lord.

Even though my life go out in despair,
I shall fold Thy feet to my heart.

In this world of Thine I shall scatter broadcast Thy love, and whatever the task Thou givest I shall fulfil.
When all is over, call me to Thine arms; for where, where else would I find refuge?

BHAKTI OR DEVOTION TO GOD

Bhakti, or devotion to God, is of the heart and not of the intellect. When the whole conscious life of an individual is pervaded with an absorbing fullness of Divine existence; when he goes through life discharging his appointed duties with the conviction that "the Intelligent One, whose body is spirit, whose form is light, who is omnipresent and invisible," is the final end of all works and all desires; when he is intoxicated, as it were, with the presence of God in all he feels, in all he sees, and in all he does; then he may be called a *Bhakta* or devotee. The mind of a true devotee melts and loses itself in the ocean of Divine effulgence, as a mountain stream in the sea. He deals with the problems and affairs of life as we do; but he is not of the world, although in it. His mind stands in relation to his deeds as the leaf of the lotus to the drops of water on it; it remains unaffected by them. It is of such men Sri Krishna says: "Those who worship Me (the Lord) with devotion, verily they are in Me and I am in them."

The devotion of such a person, however, is not in any way hostile to his usual routine of life. It must be taken as including the whole course of human duties and responsibilities. It appears, as the followers of Patanjali affirm, to be the quickest method of attaining beatitude. But it secures this end only by leading man on in the path of righteousness. It is not possible for the ordinary man to abstain entirely from action; but the true devotee performs it without attachment. He is so deeply imbued with the Divine Spirit that he confidently approaches the great God with the free gift to Him of all that he may call his. The word *mine* is entirely blotted out of his vocabulary. And he is assured that God will graciously accept his deeds as the most agreeable offerings on His altar. For the Gita declares: "However men approach

Me (the Lord), even so do I accept them; for the paths men take on every side are Mine."

How is the heart to gain this spirit of true devotion to God? The senses of man are potent for distraction. The mind is yoked to unruly horses, yet it is still strong enough to control and lead them aright. "He who has understanding and whose mind is always firmly held, his senses are under control." He may move among the diverting objects of sense without yielding to the temptation of coveting them for his own enjoyment. Wisdom enables us to renounce our desires, of which the senses, mind and intellect are the seat; nay, true wisdom consists in renunciation. Through renunciation of the fruits of action the mind gains peace, and peace leads to devotion. Mental concentration, the fixed convergence of all the forces of the mind upon one eternal "Flood of Light" is often impossible, however, in the face of the thwarting influences of the body. The methods discovered to subdue all lower impulses constitute what in the Vedanta is called Yoga. Yoga is the science of self-mastery and had its origin in the effort of man to hold communion with God and become God-like. By its practice we acquire control over our physical nature and the mind is released from its thraldrom to the flesh. By restraining the senses, the power of fixing the attention is gained; attention involves investigation and growing understanding, out of which spring love and ultimate union. Thus Yoga is the means to an end and all-absorbing devotion to God is that end. "Fix thy mind on Me," the Lord declares, "be to Me devoted, worship Me and adore Me; thus steadfastly uniting thy heart with Me, thou shalt come unto Me."

Devotion to God exalts and beautifies man's life just as it stands. It can never mean the annihilation of action and virtue; it merely changes the central force of human impulses

and makes the devotee feel that he is the instrument of a Divine wisdom which works through his intellectual and moral consciousness. The Vedanta lays stress on knowledge, the knowledge of Truth, as the final step to salvation. But this knowledge of the Vedantin has no kinship with what is ordinarily understood by that term. It is knowledge, not of the relative, but of the Absolute; and a knowledge derived not from sense perception, but from higher discrimination and Yoga or spiritual practice. Without devotion, however, it cannot be obtained. For through that alone the individual becomes the accepted of God, and life and death pursue him no more. By unselfish action, by righteousness, by the restraints of Yoga, the devotee only prepares himself for the knowledge of the True, which knowledge leads to a realization of the oneness of the individual with the eternal in an absorbing consciousness of His universal Presence. And one risen to this height of joyous, love-inspired self-abnegation and rapturous communion with God, it is hardly necessary to add, abides in Him. Such is God's true devotee who is dear to Him. For does not the Gita say: "Those who are possessed with faith, regarding me as the Supreme Goal, such devotees are exceedingly dear to Me?"

That to love God is to know God is a maxim common to all the higher forms of religion; and the religion of *Bhakti* is based on the uncontrovertible truth that love throws more light on the heavenward path of the human pilgrim than any amount of reasoning and hard mental toil. No man can ever be in the position to say the last word on the relation between *Bhakti* and *Jnana*—between Divine love and Divine light. Some attain love through light, others attain light through love; and both lead to the same goal—God. "By devotion he knows Me in truth, Who and What I am; having thus known Me in truth, he forthwith enters into Me."

NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS

From the Sanskrit. Hitherto Unpublished Translation
By Swami Vivekananda.

(*Note.*—The present translation of Narada's Aphorisms on Devotion was dictated to one of the Swami's most faithful American disciples, who writes as follows regarding it: "When Swami was preparing anything for publication he was extremely careful to be exact, as, for instance, the Patanjali Aphorisms. He worked upon them for many days, sometimes sat and meditated on the rendering of one aphorism for a whole hour. But the Narada Sutras were just thrown off without any great care. It was done solely to please K. and myself. It was at Thousand Island Park of blessed memory, just before K. left to go West. He had not long before been made a *Sannyasin* and Swami was unusually considerate of him. K. was supposed to be a *Bhakta,* and Swami often quoted passages to him from the Narada Sutras. K. frequently begged him to translate them and let him write them down for his own use. One day when I was with them Swami unexpectedly said: "Get ready and write. I will translate Narada today." I had to use just what I happened to have in hand; he would not wait for me to get anything else. The mood was upon him, and he poured forth the beginning of the Sutras so fast that I could hardly take them down. He read right along, just as if it were English, never hesitating for a word or even pausing to explain anything. He gave us about half the poem that day, and a day or two later he gave us the rest. The end, however, was not so flowing and spontaneous as the beginning—that just flowed apparently without effort. Now you can see that a translation made under such circumstances might not be strictly accurate. Swami was giving us the spirit of the poem, with no regard to verbal correctness. As it stands, the poem was purely

confidential, merely to oblige K. and myself; and, of course, we neither of us cared anything about exactness, nor could judge if we got it. We were delighted with the translation just as he gave it. In fact, so great was the pleasure under which K. and I wrote down those quick-rushing words that it may easily be that we made some mistakes, and Swami would not go over them again. It was like the bubbles on champagne: if you did not catch them on the instant, they had slipped away forever.")

CHAPTER I.

1. Bhakti is intense love for God.

2. It is the nectar of love;

3. Getting which man becomes perfect, immortal and satisfied forever;

4. Getting which man desires no more, does not become jealous of anything, does not take pleasure in vanities;

5. Knowing which, man becomes filled with spirituality, becomes calm, and finds pleasure only in God.

6. It cannot be used to fill any desires, itself being the check to all desires.

7. *Sannyas* is giving up both the local and the spiritual forms of worship.

8. The Bhakti Sannyasin is the one whose whole soul goes unto God, and whatever militates against love to God he rejects.

9. Giving up all other refuge, he takes refuge in God.

10. Scriptures are to be followed as long as one's life has not become firm,

11. Or else there is danger of doing evil in the name of liberty.

12. When love becomes established, even social forms are given up, except those which are necessary for the preservation of life.

13. There have been many definitions of love, but Narada gives these as the signs of love: When all thoughts, all words and all deeds are given up unto the Lord, and the least forgetfulness of God makes one intensely miserable, then *love has begun,*

14. As the Gopis had it—

15. Because, although worshipping God as their lover, they never forgot his God-nature;

16. Otherwise they would have committed the sin of unchastity.

17. This is the highest form of love, because there is no desire of reciprocity, which desire is in all human love.

CHAPTER II.

1. Bhakti is greater than Karma, greater than Jnàna, greater than Yoga (Ràja), because Bhakti itself is its result, because Bhakti is both the means and the end (fruit).

2. As a man cannot satisfy his hunger by simple knowledge or sight of food, so a man connot be satisfied by the knowledge or even the perception of God until love comes; therefore love is the highest.

CHAPTER III.

1. These, however, the Masters have said about Bhakti—

2. One who wants this Bhakti must give up sense enjoyments and even the company of people.

3. Day and night he must think about Bhakti and nothing else.

4. (He must) go where they sing or talk of God.

5. The principal cause of Bhakti is the mercy of a great (or free) soul.

6. Meeting a great soul is hard to obtain, and never fails to save the soul.

7. Through the mercy of God we get such Gurus!

8. There is no difference between Him and His (own) ones.

9. Seek, therefore, for this.

10. Evil company is always to be shunned.

11. Lust and anger, illusion, forgetfulness of the goal, destruction of the will (lack of perseverance) are the causes which destroy everything.

12. Evil company may at first produce disturbance like ripples, but at last it (the mind) becomes like the sea. He who lives alone cuts the bondages of this world, goes beyond the qualities of nature, and depends upon the Lord for even his living:

13. He who gives up the fruits of work, he who gives up all work and the dualism of joy and misery, who gives up even the Scriptures, gets that unbroken love for God;

14. He crosses this river and helps others to cross it.

REPORTS

The chief interest, both religious and secular, of the month of April is always in the Eastertide, and as usual a special effort to mark the festival was made at the Vedanta Centre of Boston. The chapel was filled with flowers and blossoming plants, the offerings of friends, and at the morning service, in addition to the usual organ music, there were several violin solos. The Swami Paramananda delivered an address on "Resurrection and Immortality," which made a deep impression on all who heard it. "The sages, the great poets and Seers," he said in the course of it, "have sung of the true nature of the soul; but no amount of hearing can convince us until we have a practical demonstration that the soul survives the bodily death. What is meant by the Rising Christ? That death cannot destroy the True, the Real. The idea of rising from death is a very ancient one; indeed, it goes hand in hand

with the conception of the immortality of the soul. Those, however, who accept the idea that man has a bodily resurrection, their notion cannot stand the test of either science or logic; nor can their hope be fulfilled. In this body of flesh, however, there is another body which is known as the spiritual body, wherein the soul of man abides, and that body nothing can destroy. This outer material body is only the effect, the dwelling place of something Potent, something Mighty which is indestructible; and until we have known That, we do not understand the real usefulness of this body, or how we may handle it and make it a true instrument in our spiritual growth. Again and again we are told that there is something within us which cannot die; yet when death appears, we quiver before it. What is the cause of this fear? Misconception, ignorance. It is out of the grave of ignorance that man must rise. Then will he get a glimpse of his True Self and death can never touch him. This Easter feast is most wonderfully symbolic. It is celebrated in almost every country. It may not everywhere be called by the same name, but it is a feast to bring new life, as Nature brings new life after the long dead winter. As the trees and plants burst forth into leaf and flower, so struggling man must try to gain a new impetus and manifest new spiritual life. What was the true meaning of Christ's life and death? That man, the true man, is the son of God and must become as perfect as his Father in Heaven; that he is immortal, indestructible, and must prove it by his daily living. The same lesson is taught by all the great Scriptures and teachers. The ancient Aryan sages thus remind men of their deathlessness: 'Hear, O children of Immortal Bliss, ye have forgotten your true nature. We have found the way to Everlasting Life. Follow the path and realize your immortality.' If we always worship Mammon, as Christ says, if we always cherish the body and forsake the

soul, then what have we? We may possess the whole world, but it will dwindle to nothingness unless we have gained possession of our True Self, that which is part of God. We are the heirs to Infinity. Let us claim our inheritance. Let us find the Real. To show us that Reality is the mission of Jesus the Christ and of every Saviour and Seer. May the spirit of Christ, of Buddha, and of all the Great Ones whom the world has produced in different religions and different nations inspire us to realize our Divine birthright here and now. Such is the earnest prayer of my heart."

The Swami was invited to give an address at the reception of the Chromatic Club on Good Friday afternoon. He gave an outline of Indian philosophy and poetry, and closed with extemporaneous translations from Rabindra Nath Tagore's Bengali songs.

* * *

The season at the Vedanta Centre of Washington, which now exists as a branch of the Centre in Boston, proved unusually successful and gratifying. The average attendance at all the meetings was much higher even than last year, and the number of invitations received by Sister Devamata to lecture elsewhere bore witness to the rapid and unexpected growth of interest in the teaching on the part of the general public. Sister Devamata gave in all five Sunday lectures and conducted eight week-day classes for the Centre. Besides these, she was asked to deliver a lecture on "East and West: Unity of Religions" in the main hall of the Public Library. This brought the teaching before a large number of people hitherto unfamiliar with it, and the result was manifest in the perceptible increase at the regular meetings of the Centre. On the invitation of the "New Thought Alliance" she spoke before an equally large gathering in Rauscher's Hall on "How to Attain Realization"; and later in the same week she lectured for the Theosophical Society on "Sleep and Superconscious-

ness." On April 18th she was the speaker at the Sunday morning service of the People's Church, her subject being "Evolution of the Spiritual Consciousness"; while on another day she gave an informal talk at the noonday service of the National New Thought Centre. The Secular League also invited her to lecture for them, but other engagements made it impossible. At the final Sunday meeting of the Centre the attendance was so large that there was great difficulty in finding room for all who came. A steady demand for books and pamphlets on Vedanta as well as for "The Message of the East" also testified to the growing interest. The members were overjoyed at the widespread recognition of the teaching and were eager to prolong the work another month; but as this was impossible, it was decided to arrange for a much longer season next year.

* * *

It has been nearly ten years since the Ramakrishna Students' Home was founded in Mylapore, Madras, for the purpose of helping poor and deserving students by providing them with free board and lodging under proper influence and guidance. Already the number of students admitted annually has more than doubled, and only the limit of the funds available keeps it from increasing still more rapidly. The larger house rented in 1913 was quickly outgrown, and a still more spacious one was secured last November. The standard of efficiency is so carefully maintained in the Home that during the year under review 2 of the students received government scholarships, 4 won college scholarships in the Presidency, the Wesleyan Mission and Pachaippa's Colleges, while 12 others had special concessions granted them. Evening classes were held at the Home by an able pandit; lessons in typewriting and shorthand were continued; and Swami Sharvananda of the Ramakrishna Math carried on his usual classes for religious and moral instruction.

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" 13th	*Divine Motherhood.*
" 20th	*Existence of the Soul.*
" 27th	*Concentration and Meditation.*
July 4th	*Law of Karma.*
" 11th	*Faith and Self-Reliance.*
" 18th	*Spiritual Education.*
" 25th	*The Three States of Consciousness.*
Aug. 1st	*Reincarnation and Immortality.*
" 8th	*Eastern and Western Religious Ideals.*
" 15th	*Power of Breath.*
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" 29th	*What is Unselfishness?*

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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May our thoughts be fixed on God. May our whole being be united with Him. The name of the Supreme destroys all impurities. The very sound, wherever it reaches, there all that is an impediment to true happiness vanishes. Yet we find many people who often say "Lord, Lord," but they do not find their prayers effective. Why? Because it depends on how our prayer is uttered. Some say it in only a half-hearted way, so their prayer brings only a half-hearted result. But there are others who put the whole of their heart in it and their prayer bears full fruition.

This idea that whenever the devotee takes the Name of the Lord he becomes free from all evil and his body, mind, and surroundings are purified, is common to all religions. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that, as when a man claps his hands under a tree all the birds perched on the branches fly away, so with this tree of human life. Repeating the Divine Name is like clapping the hands and at the sound all evil thoughts fly away. But when we utter it, there must be deep feeling. The mind must be wholly free from doubt, for doubt means division. It divides the mind into two, and while one part wishes to move in one direction, the other refuses to let it go. Whenever we pray or worship with a vacillating thought, it lacks conviction and does not carry. In our strong moments we believe that God exists and that we have a divine birth-

right; then again doubt comes, divides our thought and weakens us. Thus a doubting mind is always destructive. For that reason the Bhagavad-Gita says: "The ignorant, the faithless and one of doubting mind perishes. There is neither this world nor the next nor any happiness for the doubting self."

Our mind and will must be one. So long as our forces are scattered, we never attain anything, because that means that our power too is scattered; and with divided energies it is not possible to reap a true result. No weak person can ever reach the highest; no weak person can even strive for the highest. Yet no one is shut away from God. There is no human being so insignificant that he cannot serve an Ideal. Those even who now seek material things and denounce the spiritual will not always remain where they are. Some day they will rise and follow Truth. The Soul is indestructible. It cannot eternally remain in darkness. Man must ascend and realize his Divinity.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

The flint may remain for myriads of years under water, still it does not lose its inner fire. Strike it with steel whenever you like and out flashes the glowing spark. So is the true devotee firm in faith. Though he may remain surrounded by all the impurities of the world, he never loses his faith and love. He becomes entranced as soon as he hears the Name of the Almighty.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

As far as the ear, as far as the eye can reach, thou findest nothing strange, nothing but the likeness of Him; and the highest fire-flights of thy spirit never lack image or symbol to body Him forth. It draws thee on, further and further it carries thee, and by all the paths thou dost travel, it puts

on a garment of beauty. No more dost thou number, no more dost thou measure, for every step is in the Infinite.

—*Goethe.*

The searcher after that Being, Who is without equal or form, without color or pattern, Whom they know and comprehend in the Persian under the name of *Izad,* in Arabic by the blessed name of *Allah* and in Hindi as *Parabrahman* or *Narayana,* contemplates Him without the intervention of Arabic, Persian, Hindi or any other language, keeping the heart in His presence, until, being rescued from the shadows of doubt, he is identified with God.

—*Dabistan.*

You are a distinct portion of the essence of God, and contain a certain part of Him in yourself. Why then are you so ignorant of your noble birth? You carry a god about with you, wretch, and know nothing of it. Do you suppose I mean some god without you, of gold or silver? It is within yourself you carry Him and profane Him without being sensible of it, by impure thoughts and unclean actions . . . and when God Himself is within you, are not you ashamed to think and act thus, insensible of your own nature and hateful to God? . . . If God had committed some orphan to your charge, would you have been thus careless of him? He hath delivered yourself to your care and says: "I had no one fitter to be trusted than you; preserve this person for Me such as he is by nature,—modest, faithful, sublime, fearless, dispassionate, tranquil."

—*Epictetus.*

As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, wise men falter not amidst blame and praise. Wise men, after they have known the laws, become serene, like a deep, smooth and still lake.

—*Buddha.*

A MAN OF STEADY WISDOM

Class Lecture by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

Mind has two sides. It is not purely spirit, neither is it purely matter. Matter is dead, unconscious; but mind knows something, so it cannot be wholly material. It must therefore be part spirit and part matter. On one side mind is in touch with the world and that mind must sometimes feel happy, sometimes miserable. On the other side, however, mind is in touch with spirit and that mind is above pleasure and pain. Spirit has been described as calm and blissful; that is its nature. Now mind is partly spirit. If then you can dwell on that side which is spirit, your mind will become established in wisdom.

How to do this? The mind must not be affected by the external universe. The definition of the mind is that which thinks, feels and wills *just as it chooses.* This "just as it chooses" must be added. It thinks what it wills to think, calls up what it wills to remember, feels what it wills to feel. If I think that all happiness comes from the world, then I must identify myself with the body and birth and death must follow. If I and my body are one, I shall have to die; for since the body is perishable, I shall have to perish with the body. Yet I hate to die. Then what shall I do? Shall I cling to the body and die with it? Or shall I give up all attachment for the body, be calm and live? This is the question which inevitably arises. There is nothing I hate more than death; but if I wish to live, to be peaceful, to think on God, I must give up that which dies. The choice rests with each one.

If you wish to give up the world at first it will, of course, be far from easy, since the mind has the habit of dwelling on the world. When you sit down and begin to try, you may not at once succeed; but there are men who have succeeded and these examples will encourage you. It is no doubt the

most difficult thing in the world to hold the mind; but it can be kept under your control if you understand that life and happiness cannot be had except within yourself. Then if you desire happiness and your desire is strong, you will long to go to that place within where it is to be found. When you go there, you discover that you are only the witness of all these outer changes. Pleasure may come, pain may come, but you remain merely as a witness of both. Then you get a mind that is steady in wisdom and you go beyond the realm of pleasure and pain.

Pleasure and pain are twins. You never find one without the other. You want bliss uncontaminated by misery; but you can never find this where pleasure and pain exist. The same nerves are affected by the two sensations, so both rest upon the same basis. The nerves that make you feel pleasure also make you feel pain. Of course the nerves are of themselves dead, only when spirit infills them can they feel; but when they begin to think and feel through spirit, that is only the reflection of the real spirit—not the true spirit itself. Spirit is absolutely one without a second. Just as modern chemistry tells us that gold is not a compound, it is always the same; so is the nature of spirit. Pleasure and pain, happiness and misery, honour and dishonour, are not in spirit. The mind gets the idea of these from matter, not from spirit; although it derives its power to know them from spirit, because knowledge comes only through spirit. Mind is always a cognizer of facts. When it turns towards the world, it is a cognizer of material facts; when it turns towards spirit, it cognizes the one fact, which is called *Satchidananda*—Existence-Wisdom-Bliss Absolute. Thus the knowledge of the Supreme is gained by turning the mind towards spirit. Then when the mind acquires this knowledge, it finds that the bliss it was seeking was all the while within itself. When the

mind reaches this state, it loves to go away from the world. But this comes only from experience.

Every man is searching after wisdom, after life, after bliss. When he will discover that these can be found only out of the world, then he will be anxious to go in that direction. We are now tied to the world because we think that life, wisdom and bliss are to be found here. As soon as we learn that they cannot be had here, then we naturally turn away from this world. We see that the world gives a little bit of pleasure, but that pleasure is limited, so we do not want to stay in it. If after steadily searching for some time a man is able to find out his true being, he will naturally care to live in that and will have no inclination to come away from it. He will feel that that is his true home and he will rest there content. Then he becomes a man of steady wisdom.

When he has thus known his real nature as absolutely one and above pleasure and pain, he will understand that when pleasant or unpleasant experiences come, they do not come from his real self and he is unaffected by them. If for any reason such a soul remains here, he will be happy anywhere in the whole universe. He may be insulted, but that does not move him. He knows that he is the eternal, immutable Self. He knows that all these appearances, these pleasures and pains are in matter, whereas he is spirit, so they cannot take place in him. He merely looks on at them all as a spectator. As a man watches a performance at the theatre, so he enjoys this great drama of the universe written by God. How many scenes it contains! But he looks at the spectacle unmoved, enjoying both the drama and the Dramatist.

He should be regarded as a man of steady wisdom therefore, who is never affected by pleasure or pain. Because our minds are in touch with the world, we are moved by heat and cold, happiness and misery; but his mind is not in touch

with the world, so he is not disturbed by them. As the tortoise can draw in its limbs and protect itself from harm, so when a man can draw all his senses inside himself and forget the world, he cannot be moved by it. But this is not easy. Only a man of steady wisdom can thus collect his sense energies within himself by means of *Pratyahara* (in-drawing the mind). For others it is the most difficult thing, because all our senses are made to carry us out into the world. Our eyes are intended to see beautiful forms, our ears to hear sweet sounds, our tongues to taste savoury dishes. Only when a man begins to seek inside himself for happiness will his sense-energies flow inward. The mind of an ordinary man of the world naturally runs outward. Not so a man of steady wisdom; his senses naturally flow in. So the Gita says: "What is natural for a man of the world is unnatural for a Yogi." For example, it is natural for a Yogi to go away from the world, it is natural for the ordinary man to go towards it. Once someone asked Sri Ramakrishna what he felt in the condition of *Samadhi* (super-conscious vision). He replied: "If you keep a fish out of water for a while and then put it back, what will it feel? That it has got back to its home. So when a soul goes into *Samadhi,* it feels that it has gone home, because that is its natural condition." Thus for man a sitting posture is natural and he can remain in it for a long time; if on the contrary he has to stand on his head with his legs up, he may stay for a few moments, but it is not a natural posture and soon he will have to change.

When we are in a natural condition, we are at rest; so this very struggle in the world shows that man is not in his natural condition here. A man of steady wisdom alone is peaceful. But that is the true nature of every man; and when we go within, we shall find it. Only when we are calm and peaceful do we return to our natural condition. Then

we cease to go outside. Now we think that if we want knowledge or wisdom, we must get it from some more scholarly man. But we must get it for ourselves. When Yudhishthira looked over the battle-field of Kurukshetra, he began to grieve, saying: "How many widows I have made! They are all weeping because of me." Sri Krishna was by his side, so he asked Him how he could get rid of his restlessness and trouble. Sri Krishna replied: "I can help you gain victory over the whole world outside, but there inside yourself I cannot help you. There you must fight out your own battle. I am the creator of the entire universe; in that I am the Lord and can help you. But the moment you forget your body and go inside, there I have no access, there you are the Lord. That is your world and you must rule it for yourself. Here I am the master, there you are the master. But if you think you cannot do it for yourself, then if you will throw away your egotism, I can enter and sit upon the throne. In your mind there is a throne, but you have seated yourself upon it, so there is no place for Me. If, however, you find that you are too weak to govern and will withdraw yourself, then I can come and help you. If you are there, I cannot be there. In this outside world we all exist simultaneously; there is room for Me and for you. But in that mental realm there is only room for one; so only when you go away, can I come in and rule. Do this. Cease to think that you are the doer. Then you will find a way out of your trouble."

When you become a man of steady wisdom, it means that your apparent man has been dethroned and the real man has risen up. Your natural state then is introspective and you begin to taste true bliss. This is the lesson we all have to learn if we would possess unfailing wisdom; we must lose all egotism and realize that everything is done by God. He is the only Doer in the universe. When you feel this, at that

moment true wisdom will come. Your sense energies will then flow towards God, because He alone can make you happy. You may know a man of steady wisdom by this,—that in a moment he can withdraw his mind from the world. He may be talking to you, then suddenly his consciousness is no longer here. Just as a tortoise can at once draw in his limbs, so in an instant he can withdraw his sense energies. Only such a man has become established in wisdom and no one else. Suppose a man sits down quietly and says, "I must go inside myself." He closes his eyes, acts like a *Yogi* and thus withdraws his senses for a while. He starves his eyes, he starves his ears, he does not give any of the senses their proper food and for the time being these outer things do not exist for him. There is no touch, taste or sound for him, but it does not follow that attachment for these has left him. He may still have an intense desire to enjoy different kinds of food; and when hunger for them again comes up, he will have to satisfy it. If you wish to get rid of attachment, of that ever-recurring hunger, it can only be done by knowing your true nature, by realizing that you are wisdom itself, happiness itself. It is said that when a man goes to take a bath in the Ganges, the water is so holy that all his sins are washed off; but they perch upon the trees on the bank and when he comes out, they drop down and ride him once more. So we may take a bath in the Ganges of meditation, but when we come out, the world is waiting for us and falls upon us again. To escape it, we must dive deep. If we wish to escape we must go to the very source,—to the Feet of the Lord. To do this we must plunge deeper and deeper inside. We must go to God and to no one else. We must realize that He alone is our true Father, He alone is our true Mother, He alone is our true Friend. Then we shall enjoy eternal life, eternal wisdom and eternal bliss.

ASCENDING MAN

Bengali Poem by Swami Paramananda.

(Translated for "The Message of the East.")

Steadily onward flows the stream of life,
Now running slowly, slowly, and anon
Rushing in rapid torrent. Ever moves
This deathless stream towards life's eternal goal.
It pays not heed to aught that bars its way.
Naught in this world can check its headlong course.
It carries him who floats his body on that tide,
Forward he ever moves, although perchance
Slowly ofttimes. Yet surely shalt thou know
Defeat can ne'er be his. This day or next,
This year or aeons hence, to that abode
Eternal, pure must every soul attain.

GOD AND FREEDOM IN THE VEDANTA

By J. J. Goodwin.

If the succession of German thinkers who made the seventeenth, eighteenth and half the nineteenth centuries famous by the boldness with which they undertook to grapple with the mysteries of our being, failed to get within any measurable distance of an actual solution, their efforts, nevertheless, served an excellent purpose. They succeeded, for example, in establishing a logical and scientific necessity for a God, in Whom the world of sensation possessed whatever of reality it could claim. The object which all men seek either by philosophy, or by religion, or by science is a unity which was never created and which is therefore Infinite, but from or on account of which all that we see, feel and hear exists. That the search is not in vain and that such an Infinite is discoverable, may very properly be taken for granted in that the idea is universal in all minds. So much the German School

has conceded. But that the Infinite cannot be reached through the finite, if it needs proof at all, has once and for all been made abundantly clear, we should imagine, by the succession of failures of such trained intellects as went to make up the history of the German transcendental period. If there be any doubt on this point, let us briefly examine into some of the aspects of the question.

Mind is a part of time, space and causation and lies therefore within time, space and causation. To think, we have to think in time; it is impossible to conceive anything which did not begin in time, which is not preceded by previous time and which will not be succeded by time. Our thoughts are also in space; the human mind fails to conceive anything which has not form, indeed the only idea of thought itself is this giving of shape. The mind is a storehouse of information; and when it is required to bring any part of this information into consciousness, the mind selects the idea and makes a mental image of it. The mind also exists under the law of causation; so much all physical sciences concede,—that what is now is the effect of what has been. If the mind then is within these three laws, obviously it is impossible to bring even the whole of time, of space, or of causation within the knowledge of the mind. But each of these three laws precludes an Infinite; for an Infinite which has the limiting elements of time within it is a contradiction, so with space and causation. If it be impossible for the mind to grasp the whole truth of these laws, how then can it possibly hope to comprehend that which even goes beyond these?

Yet, as before stated, the Infinite exists, therefore it must be discoverable; but in confining ourselves to limited means, we are making that discovery an impossible undertaking. We can never know the Absolute. What then can we do? We can realize that we are the Absolute. The very idea of an

Infinite precludes a second. From this it must follow that this universe must also be that Absolute. Obviously it is so, but—and here the Vedanta is saved from degenerating into Pantheism—this universe is not as it appears to us. It exists, but not as we know it. The idea that there are differentiations and consequently imperfections is a superimposition caused by ignorance; but there is still a reality upon which these mistaken notions appear. Hence we see that the Vedanta is neither pure realism nor pure idealism; and yet either of these is explicable in the light of Vedanta, in as much as it says there is a Reality which appears as material and yet is not material. In that appearance is all that is true of realism. In the statement that, given an Infinite, there cannot also be an independent finite lies all that is true of idealism. But above and beyond both of these is the Truth, the Reality, which is neither material nor immaterial, but which contains within itself all that is true of either. As it is declared in the Bhagavad-Gita: "There are two beings in the world—the perishable and the imperishable; all the creatures are the perishable and the Immutable Spirit abiding within them is called the imperishable. But another, the Highest Being, is designated the Supreme Spirit, who pervading the three worlds, supporteth them—the Eternal Lord."

In seeking to find an existence out of which phenomenal existence has sprung, we are all, no matter in what direction our inquiries are turned, actuated, as I have already said, by the desire to discover an independent Being, which, while explaining all that we see, feel and hear, in no way relies upon either a previous existence or the present world of sensation for its establishment. In other words we who are subject to the bondages of matter seek something which is free. Descartes says that the proof that there is a God is the universal belief that there is, and he is merely expressing in different

language the old Stoic idea that man is born with certain natural conceptions of good, by which he is able to distinguish positive good from good which is transient and dependent on surrounding circumstances. In the same way we are entitled to insist upon the existence of freedom because of the universal belief that freedom is possible, and of the universal attempt to obtain that freedom, either in the material world or by release from it. That the conception of what this freedom is, wherein it lies and how it is to be reached, varies, makes no difference to the belief that there *is* something which is free. For example, Vedantists of the *Advaita* or Monistic school will hold that this freedom is always existing within us, our own Soul; Dvaitists or dualistic Vedantists regard freedom as service of God without the restrictions which life in this world imposes; Schopenhaeur says it is the will which is free; the Stoics say that there are natural conceptions, born with every man, which, if allowed to guide us, will free us not only from unhappiness, but from happiness tempered by evil; Buddhists say it is annihilation of the law of Karma.

Take away the idea of freedom, where shall we find the justification for ethics, apart from the motive power? If God is most expressed in man and the best life is that which is nearest to what we conceive to be the nature of God, then each man's conception of God becomes the thing to be obtained. But ethics teaches the renunciation of the ego—not we, but thou and all. Ethics tells us that we realize the greatest good in the greatest number. If, however, that good is expressed in each man's highest conception, in order that there may be life, since manifested life is based on variation, there must be difference of conception, and the question arises which is the greatest good, my conception or yours? Universality is then impossible on these lines; and with the dethronement of universality, ethics also must go and utilitarian-

ism must take its place. Utilitarianism is the recognition and practice of that which appeals to each and every individual as most beneficial. Taking an extreme case, it may appear to me that I shall best obtain my own comfort by the removal of my neighbour. But that neighbour in his highest possible manifestation is also God, and we are face to face with an absurdity,—God the enemy of God.

If we once recognize the necessity for relativity in matter —and no science, no stretch of imagination will permit us to deny it—we must necessarily therefore look beyond or outside of matter for that freedom which we are all convinced is to be found; and the *Atman* of the Vedantin seems to meet every requirement. It is immaterial and therefore not dependent on limitation; and being beyond limitation, it must be One, without a second which can limit and condition it. If it is One only, it is consequently universal; and this universality establishes the necessity for ethics. Every "natural conception" of good finds explanation, the reason for law and order is made clear, the greatest good for the greatest number is established as an indisputable fact. "The sage is he who looks with an equal eye upon the Brahmin, the cow, the elephant, the dog, and the chandala. Even in this life they have conquered heaven whose minds are firm fixed on this sameness. For *Brahman* (the Supreme) is one and the same to all; therefore such are said to be living in *Brahman.*"

If we regard this as the truth, we can very well understand why the happiness of one is best obtained in the happiness of the many; because in hurting another the injury is equally mine, and because the greater the expansion of good, the more powerfully must it be felt not only by all, but by each one affected by the expansion. Freedom then must be possible by release from the bondages of matter, but can never be possible in matter. Neither can we afford to look lightly

on another point. While we are still dependent on others, our strength, like everything else, is also limited and must always remain so. Good work requires strength and courage to perform it. For this reason also the conclusion of the Vedanta is infinitely preferable. If there is only one expressing itself in these many, what occasion remains for fear? The Self cannot kill the Self, neither can It injure It in any way. Death and failure are impossible to me while you live and succeed, for your success is mine and my failure merely contributes to your success, the fruits of which I enjoy equally with you. Therefore the Vedanta not only disproves the possibility of abject weakness, but gives the best of all reasons for the struggle towards absolute strength, in which alone lies that Bliss which is but another name for freedom.

THE STORY OF SVETAKETU

From the Chandogya-Upanishad.

There once lived a boy called Svetaketu Aruneya, the grandson of Aruna. One day, when he was twelve years old, his father, Uddalaka, called him and said: "Svetaketu, you must go to school; for there is not one of our family, dear, who has failed to study the Vedas and been content to remain a Brahman by birth only." Thus he was taken to the house of a teacher and lived there until he was twenty-four. He then returned to his father, self-satisfied, proud and believing himself well-read. His father, observing his state of mind, said to him: "You feel that you are now very learned and important, but did you ever ask to be instructed in that by which we hear what cannot be heard, by which we perceive what cannot be perceived, by which we know what cannot be known?"

"What is that, sir?" the youth questioned.

The father replied: "My dear, as by one clod of clay all

that is made of clay is known, the difference between the various objects being only in name and form, but the truth being that all is clay; and as, my dear, by one nugget of gold all that is made of gold is known, the difference between the various objects being only in the name, arising from speech, but the truth being that all is gold; and as by one piece of iron all that is made of iron is known, the difference between the various objects being only in the name, but the truth being that all is iron—such, my dear, is That."

The son exclaimed: "But surely those venerable men who were my teachers could not have known that; for if they had known it, why should they not have told it to me? Do you, sir, therefore tell me that."

"Be it so," said the father. "In the beginning, my dear, there existed that which is One only, without a second. Others say that in the beginning there was only non-being; and that from non-being that which is, was born. But how could this be, my son? How could being spring from non-being? No, my dear, there existed in the beginning pure Being, One without a second. This Being thought: 'May I become many, may I grow manifold.' And It sent forth fire. Then that fire thought, 'May I become many, may I grow manifold.' And it sent forth water. Water thought: 'May I become many, may I grow manifold.' And it sent forth food (earth).

"That Being, from which had sprung fire, water and earth, now thought, 'Let me enter as the living Self into these three and bring forth all names and forms.' He entered in as the living Self and out of Him came the whole manifested universe."

* * *

"Please, sir, instruct me still more," said the son.

"Be it so, my child," the father replied. "If some one

were to strike at the root of this large tree here, it would bleed but live. If he were to strike at its trunk, it would bleed but live. If he were to strike at its top, it would bleed but live. Pervaded by the living Self that tree stands firm, drinking in its nourishment and rejoicing. But if the living Self leave one of its branches, that branch withers; if it leave a second, that branch withers; if it leave the whole tree, the whole tree withers. In exactly the same manner, my son, this body withers and dies when the living Self has left it; but the living Self dies not. That which is the subtle Essence, in That has all that exists its life. That is the True. That is the Self. And thou, O Svetaketu, art That."

"Please, sir, explain this to me still further," said the son.

"Be it so, my child," replied the father. "Fetch me a fruit from yonder Nyagrodha tree."

"Here it is, father."

"Break it."

"It is broken, sir."

"What do you see there, my dear?"

"Infinitesimally small seeds."

"Break one of them."

"It is broken, sir."

"What do you see there?"

"Nothing, sir."

"My son, that subtle Essence which you do not perceive there, of that very Essence this great Nyagrodha tree exists. Believe me, my son. That which is the subtle Essence, in That has all that exists its life. That is the True. That is the Self. And thou; O Svetaketu, art That."

"Please, sir, instruct me still more." asked the son.

"Be it so, my child," the father replied. "Place this salt in water and come to me in the morning with it."

The son did as he was commanded and the father said to him: "Bring me the salt which you placed in the water last night."

Svetaketu looked for it, but could not find it, because it was all dissolved. The father, observing this, said: "Taste the water from the top. How is it?"

"It is salt, sir."

"Taste it from the bottom. How is it?"

"It is salt, sir."

"Throw it away, then come back to me."

The father then said, "Here also in this body you do not perceive the True Self, my son, but It is there indeed. That which is the subtle Essence, in It all that exists has its life. That is the True. That is the Self. And thou, O Svetaketu, art That."

POETRY OF THE VEDANTA

Excerpt of address by Swami Paramananda.

(Delivered at St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie, New York.)

Inspiration is the common heritage of the poets of all nations. But according to the ideal and aspiration of the individual singers the expression of that inspiration varies. The type of poetry which India has produced is essentially transcendental; for although the Rishis or Vedic Seers often use allegorical expressions and draw their similes from nature, yet always their chief aim is to lead man far beyond the border line of the material world to that which is infinite, undivided and everlasting.

In all their teaching they especially emphasize the three fundamental principles of the spiritual life: discrimination of the Real from the unreal, the permanent from the fleeting; renunciation of the unreal and transitory; and realization of the Real and Eternal. "The Real is one thing and the unreal another. It is well with him who chooses the Real. He who

chooses the unreal misses the true end of life," so a great Vedic poet declares in one of the Upanishads. "The final Truth is never revealed to the ignorant who is deluded by the glamour of wealth and regards the visible world to be the only reality, for the Unchangeable can never be gained by things which are changeable. The wise beholding by means of the highest meditation the Ancient One who is hidden in the cave of the heart, casts off all grief. A mortal, having realized through discrimination the Subtle Self, rejoices, because he has obtained that which is the cause of all true joy."

The vision of this one, undivided and imperceptible subtle Essence is the underlying theme of all the poetry of the Vedas. "As fire, though one, having entered the world, becomes various according to what it burns, so does the Atman (Self) within all living beings, though one, become various according to what it enters. There is one Ruler, the Self of all living beings, who makes the one form manifold, the wise who perceive Him seated within their soul, to them belongs eternal bliss, not to others. Unchanging among the changing, Consciousness of the conscious, who though One fulfills the desires of many, the wise who perceive Him seated within their soul, to them belongs eternal peace, not to others."

Because of this constant dwelling on the Absolute One, the sages of India are peculiarly lacking in self-consciousness. Nowhere do we find them seeking personal glorification. Often even the writings are set down without mention of the author's name or any reference to when or where they were written. The Truth is given in so pure and impersonal a form that occidental scholars frequently regard it as too abstract and unhistoric. But those ancient sages firmly believed that Truth, being self-existent, must continue to exist and shed its radiance without the support of any human authority. An-

other interesting fact is that they never sought to force their inspiration for any material end. Their desire was to gain the Truth for the sake of Itself and they often patiently devoted their whole life to silent searching through contemplation and selfless devotion. This made their mind like a pure crystal, which has no color of its own but possesses the power to reflect clearly the object held before it. We see this in the case of the great sage Valmiki. He had lived long years in a solitary forest retreat devoting his days to prayer and meditation, when one morning as he went to the river to bathe, he saw two doves playing joyously together. But as he watched them a hunter's arrow pierced the heart of the male bird and beholding the anguish of its stricken mate, he cried out in a melodious Sanskrit verse: "O thou cruel hunter, in all this wide world success will ne'er be thine, for without cause hast thou slain one of these love-intoxicated doves." And still another verse followed, expressing his own pain and sorrow. Then turning to his disciple, he asked in wonder, "What is this, my son? Have you ever before heard me speak in such poetic, rhythmic language?" A voice from above answered, "This is inspiration. Saraswati, the goddess of learning, has taken thee as her own. Thou hast been chosen to set down the record of Great Rama's life. So long as the sun and moon shine and the rivers flow on earth thy words will endure. They will bring perpetual solace to mankind and make thee immortal among men." Thus it was that the hermit Valmiki wrote the great Indian epic "Ramayana."

True poetry is a spontaneous outpouring of the heart and must therefore have a universal appeal. The poetry of the different nations is like so many beautiful gardens, each with its special flowers and peculiar charm. Although we may cherish our own garden above all others, yet it can do us no harm to visit our neighbor's garden—not only can it do us

no harm, but it may give us new inspiration and greater understanding to enrich our own. This absence of condemnation and broad spirit of universal sympathy is the dominant message of the poetry of Vedanta.

REPORTS

On May 9th Swami Paramananda was invited to speak in the Parish Hall of the Church of St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie, New York, on "The Poetry of Vedanta." He left for New York on the 5th and spent ten days in seeing various old friends of the work there. On the invitation of one, he gave an informal Talk at Scarsdale before an earnest group who desired to hear of the Vedanta teaching, and he also passed a night at Garrison-on-the-Hudson. Letters since received tell of the warm interest awakened by his visit and express the hope that it may be repeated at more frequent intervals.

The Swami also delivered a lecture before the Boston Metaphysical Club on Friday afternoon, May 21st. His subject was "Spiritual Culture the Crying Need of this Age," and he brought home with telling conviction the fact that the path of advancing civilization must lie along the way of spiritual evolution. The present conditions existing in the world, he said, proved beyond doubt that one-sided culture must lead to inevitable disaster and that true growth, either for the nation or the individual, can come only through a balanced development of the material and the spiritual.

The month of May showed great activity in the work of the Vedanta Centre of Boston. The attendance at all the Services and Classes was large and among those who came for the first time were some who were drawn by the Swami's

Talk at the Chromatic Club or by his lecture before the Metaphysical Club. To celebrate the anniversary of the dedication of the new home, the Swami gave a dinner to sixty-one of those most closely identified with the Centre, himself preparing all the various dishes served. Such interest was manifested in the occasion that several friends made the journey from New York especially to be present and others expressed their appreciation in a number of impromptu speeches at the close of the dinner.

The Monday afternoon class has been suspended for the summer. The Sunday Services at 11 A. M. and 5 P. M. and the Tuesday and Thursday evening classes at 8 will continue as usual.

* * *

Despite the difficult conditions at present existing every where in Europe, the new branch Centre in Geneva keeps faithfully and earnestly on its way, having continued without interruption the weekly meetings begun in the early part of October. A letter just received from the one in charge tells us that the demand for the literature is increasing and the interest in the teaching deepening. The members have read through several of the text-books, at the same time translating them for the benefit of those who do not understand English, and the "Message of the East" is also read in the same manner each month.

* * *

The Thirteenth Annual Report of The Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Benares shows that during the year 10,843 patients were treated, besides which 248 cases were given care in their own homes; 78 aged persons, unable to earn their livelihood, were provided with weekly rations of rice and small sums of money; 120 cases of utter destitution were relieved; and 5 persons, picked up in the

street dying of starvation, were nursed back to life. All the workers in the institution give their services without remuneration and the whole spirit of the Home is in accord with the Ideal preached so insistently by Swami Vivekananda,—that there can be no truer worship of God than the selfless service of man. The Institution has now acquired a large additional plot of land where it is hoped, when sufficient money has been collected, to erect not only further wards for the hospital, but also a Refuge for invalids, helpless widows and orphans.

BOOK REVIEWS

Another in the series of posthumous works by the Sister Nivedita has appeared under the title "Footfalls of Indian History." It is a large book of 276 pages, with 22 illustrations in black and white and 6 colored plates by well-known Indian artists. The subject-matter covers a large field, dealing with "The History of India and Its Study," "Cities of Buddhism," "Some Problems of Indian Research" and a number of other chapters devoted to studies of India's most famous temples and cities. A vast store of knowledge regarding India and a deep understanding of the Indian spirit are evident in every page; and the lines flow with that swift, surging fervor which characterizes all of Sister Nivedita's writings. We give at random a brief passage or two: "We are often told that Indian literature includes no histories. Even if this be true—and we shall be better able to discuss the question in a generation or two—we must remember that India herself is a master-document in this kind. The country is her own record. She is the history we must learn to read." "And here was demonstrated the great law that will be expressed again and again in history, whenever the glory of India rises to one of its supreme moments, the law of the antithesis between city and university, between *samaj* and religious orders,

between the life of affairs and the life of thought. Antithetic as they are, however, these are nevertheless complementary. Spirituality brings glory in its train. The monastic life reacts to make civic strength." "Indian civilisation has educated its children from the beginning to the supreme function of realising ideas." (Price $2.00. Published by Longmans, Green & Co.)

"Rabindranath Tagore, the Man and His Poetry" by a friend and fellow-countryman, B. K. Roy, just published by Dodd, Mead & Co. shows that interest in the great Bengali poet continues unabated. The book is well produced and contains as frontispiece a remarkable picture of Mr. Tagore with his autograph below. Many intimate facts regarding the poet are told in a pleasant, informal way. An especially interesting chapter is the one describing his model school at Bolpur, where he is striving to train his boys to "combine in life the spiritual tendencies of India with the spirit of social service so characteristic of Western Society." Mr. Tagore makes his home at the school. He rises with the pupils and teachers at 4.30 or even earlier and after his morning bath, we are told, goes to the roof of his solitary house and loses himself in meditation for hours together. Not infrequently he prepares his own modest meal in an "economic cooker,"while for exercise he works in his garden or takes long walks through the forest. Twice a week he preaches to the boys and teachers in the temple and with both he has the closest and tenderest relations. He lives a life of unalloyed simplicity, Mr. Roy tells us, "thinking exalted thoughts, writing poems and plays, loving the children in the school and the birds in the woods. Thus he spends his days in this quiet spot, in constant communion with the Godhead and radiating calmness all around his modern hermitage." (Price $1.25.)

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VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

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Aug. 1st	*Reincarnation and Immortality.*
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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. IV. July, 1915 No. 7

Three mountains stand as typical of progress,—the Himalayas of Indo-Aryan, Sinai of Hebrew and Olympus of Greek civilization. When the Aryans reached India they found the climate so hot that they could not work incessantly, so they began to think; thus they became introspective and developed religion. They discovered that there was no limit to the power of mind, they therefore sought to master that; and through it they learned that there was something infinite coiled up in the frame we call man which was seeking to become kinetic. To evolve this became their chief aim. Another branch of the Aryans went into the smaller and more picturesque country of Greece, where the climate and natural conditions were more favorable, so their activity turned outward and they developed the external arts and outward liberty. The Greek sought political liberty. The Hindu has always sought spiritual liberty. Both are one-sided. The Indian cares not enough for national protection or patriotism, they will only defend their religion; while with the Greek and in Europe (where the Greek civilization finds its continuation) the country comes first. To care only for spiritual liberty and not for social liberty is a defect, but the opposite is a still greater defect. Liberty of both soul and body is to be striven for.

—*Unpublished Notes of Class Talk by Swami Vivekananda.*

SPIRITUAL CULTURE, THE CRYING NEED OF THIS AGE.

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

Delivered Before The Metaphysical Club of Boston

This age in which we live is a very remarkable age from many points of view. The numerous scientific discoveries and mechanical inventions which modern minds have achieved for our comfort and happiness, are undoubtedly wonderful in making the machinery of life run smoothly; but as we observe existing conditions, can we say that we have all-sided culture? Looking out over the different civilizations of the world, what is the standard of life today? Are we not a little one-sided in spite of the glamour of all our material achievements? Are we not forgetting the inner and paying too much attention to the outer? Life consists of two parts, —the visible and the invisible, the physical and the spiritual; and when these two are perfectly balanced, then alone can we hope to obtain a high state of civilization. If on the contrary we overbalance on the side of the physical, there cannot be any true advancement.

Our present tendency is to think of this life and this life alone, although the teaching of Christ is, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven." From all pulpits, churches and temples this message is given, not only in the Occident but in the Orient, for Truth is everywhere one and the same fundamentally. Those who think that spiritual truth is centered in one religion or in one form of philosophy are mistaken, for the spirit of God resides in all and He controls everything. All things come from Him and without Him there cannot be anything. This conception of the All-pervading, Supreme Deity is universal and forms the basis of every religious faith. The spirit of Christianity is love, forgiveness, non-resistance of evil, as exemplified by the life of Jesus the Christ. But

people who claim to be Christians, are they all following His example? We do not need to ask. We do not need to wait for an answer. We know there would be no quarrel, no fight, especially among people who profess the same religion, if they all truly followed His example. Why then this disorder, dissension and annihilation? There must be something wrong at the root of what we call our culture.

Religion is not at fault. Wherein lies the fault then? In the application. We talk of spiritual things, but our talk is only from the surface and not based on experience; whereas true religion means "being and becoming." Man, according to the Vedic teaching, is not religious because he belongs to a church; he is not spiritual because he can recite long passages from the Scriptures; a man is religious because he is spiritually awakened, because he possesses that inherent Divine Power about which we read in the books. In India the great teachers are often men distinguished, not because they have learning, but because they have spiritual insight, they live the life. And does not all religion teach that? Did not Christ cry out to his disciples to become perfect and to do the things which He taught, not merely say them. And that is the cry which is still sounding, but we turn a deaf ear and try to frame our religious principles to suit our own purposes. Even in the name of a religion based on non-resistance, love and forgiveness people have found excuse for conflict and bloodshed. We can always drag down a lofty Ideal to our level, if we stubbornly hold to our material ambitions and do not wish to be uplifted. But in doing this we often sacrifice the most vital part in our life and the result is bitter disappointment and suffering, not only for ourselves but for others.

We are all one, children of One Infinite Spirit, whether we recognize it or not. We are souls and as souls we are all bound together. As it is declared in the Bhagavad-Gita by

the Lord: "Like pearls on a thread all this universe is strung in Me. I am the life in all beings." All souls are fundamentally united, but because we do not recognize that unity which underlies our very existence, we see only diversity, dissension and disharmony. Then how is it possible to put into practice what Christ taught,—non-resistance of evil, brotherly love, loving our neighbor as ourself? Only by realizing that there is no difference between our neighbor and ourself. We may be one in spirit, but not until we are consciously united through love, not until we apprehend that our spirit is identical with the Cosmic Spirit which is pervading and permeating everywhere, can we expect to radiate love and to forgive the mistakes even of our enemies. This is where the difficulty lies. We need not find fault with the churches or with religion; the real defect is to be found within ourselves. Do we practise religion? If we do not practise, no matter how much we may quote from books, no matter how great our theories may be, they can be of very little help to us. Religion does not consist in mere intellectual apprehension or in display of learning, it is not in any form or ritual; it is in the life. The man who lives the life, he alone is a true Christian, a true Buddhist, a true Hindu—whatever name he may bear—for the spirit is one and the same.

This truth was strongly emphasized by the great Seers of the ancient Indo-Aryans—the Aryans who lived in India and founded a wonderful culture and civilization, but on a very different basis from the Aryans of the Occident. They did not give the first place to military conquest, to material acquisition and bodily comforts, but they made wisdom and spiritual attainment the ultimate aim of their whole social and political organization. The sage and the saint held a higher rank in the community than the king or ruler. This is especially evident in their system of education. Although the

various branches of learning,—philosophy, logic, grammar, rhetoric, astronomy, algebra, geometry, etc., were taught as well as the Vedas, yet spiritual training was regarded as the most essential factor; for those early Aryans believed that without this man was like a boat without a rudder, he might be helplessly tossed and drowned in the waters of life. And who were the teachers? Not merely men who could fill the brains of their pupils with words, but men who possessed spiritual illumination; they were the only ones qualified for the position of teacher. It was by such mighty illumined souls that these young lives were nurtured and moulded. Thus their characters were firmly established in Truth; and when they went out into the world, they were able to fulfill their duties as citizens and householders without losing their spiritual vision. This resulted in a very balanced state of culture.

We can never doubt the high achievements of the ancient Indo-Aryans or Hindus, when we read their profound philosophic writings and their exalted spiritual teachings. They knew: "Truth alone conquers. Truth alone endures. Truth outlives all things." Look at the powerful Roman empire and other empires built up by materialistic monarchs; they have faded away, time has robbed them of all their glory, but spiritual Truth, the gentle message of a Christ or a Buddha has continued to live and guide suffering mankind out of the darkness of ignorance. Buddha did not try to conquer or possess anything. He even renounced what He possessed by birth, his kingdom, and yet today through his love, through his life, He controls half the world, because He strove for something not of a material nature; He worked not with any ulterior motive but for humanity. Sometimes we see with these eyes only the things immediately surrounding us, but such things can never bring us satisfaction. "Look not,"

St. Paul says, "at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." People who are awakened spiritually are not content with things which are immediate, they seek after that which is far-reaching in its effect. And today what is needed above all else is to extend our vision beyond matter to the plane of spirit.

As long as we continue to desire the fleeting, forgetting the more vital part of our life, dissension and quarrel will never cease. Why does a man strike his brother? Because he feels that his brother is more fortunate than he and he covets what his brother has. It is short-sightedness which causes all disharmony, corruption and unhappiness. It is because we are too limited in our point of view. So what we want is to expand our vision, expand our understanding. And what will do that? The spiritual life—the life about which we read in the Bible, the life about which we read in the Vedas, the life about which we read in all the various Scriptures of the world. That is the life which we must make real. Not a superficial acceptance of religion, but making an actual reality of religion is the need of the present time. If a man can stand up and prove through his life that that which Christ taught was true and practical, that one man's influence will be tremendous; that one man's service to humanity will be more mighty than any number of mechanical inventions. It is spiritual education which is needed to uplift humanity, to bring about a permanent basis of peace and happiness. As long, however, as we neglect that factor and rush after things which are passing, disaster will always follow; for we cannot accept things of perishable nature and expect to get lasting satisfaction. Our efforts will always be in vain as long as we take the unreal for the

real, the impermanent for the permanent. What we need is spiritual-mindedness, a sincere, devoted yearning to kindle once more in our hearts the glowing reality of the spirit. Nothing else can avail. Merely believing in doctrines and dogmas, no matter how beautiful, can never bring wisdom and strength.

This is the great difficulty in the present day. Religion has become too superficial. A man belongs to a church or he subscribes to an organization; whether he goes to church or not, whether he tries to live the life or not is of secondary importance to him. But, my friends, that is not the spirit of religion. The thing of primary importance should be to live the life and this great lesson we can also learn from the Indo-Aryans. Their spiritual life was the everyday life. It was not dependent on going to church or observing any one special day, but whatever they did at every moment of their existence was made a part of their religion. To do this they had reminders,—certain hours of worship, certain consecrated corners, certain symbols which would bring before their mind the reality of the Spirit. Before each act, eating, drinking, sleeping, working, their first thought was given to God, for is He not the Giver of all life? Should we not then think of Him Who bestows everything on us? At waking the first picture in the mind, they said, should be of God, the first hour should be spent in communion with Him; thus man's consciousness would be so strengthened that he could go out into the world and remain firm in his spiritual life.

We need to find balance before we start with our work. No matter what we do, no matter how much we do, it is with what spirit we do, that is the most vital. Spirituality is not limited to one particular form of life; it does not depend on retiring from the world or on living in the world; it consists in bringing the reality of the Spirit into our life,

in remaining faithful to our Ideal without compromising with our lower nature. One of our great teachers used to say: "Do not degrade your Ideal. When you find that your imperfections are too great to permit you to realize It, struggle on, but do not compromise by dragging It down." What we want is to march onward and forward, elevating our consciousness and never lowering our spiritual standard. When people forget the true spirit of religion and begin to quarrel over the exterior forms, there comes degradation in the spiritual life and fanaticism and religious conflicts arise. In the fundamental principles there can be no disharmony, no quarrel; but when people lose sight of these or when they fail to practise what they believe, then they find great difficulty in understanding one another. There is an Indian parable of two people who began to fight over a basket of fruit and as they were struggling to snatch it from each other's hands, the fruit all dropped into the ditch, while they went on quarrelling over the empty basket. A passerby seeing them, said: "Why are you quarrelling? The fruit has fallen into the ditch. Why should you fight over the basket?" And that is often the case with us. We forget the essential and waste our energies disputing over the non-essentials.

Although we may boast of all our material achievements, although we may think that we are living in a most enlightened age, we must not lose sight of the fact that until we become developed spiritually, until we can put our spiritual and material achievements side by side and find that they harmonize, that all we do for our material happiness does not conflict with our spiritual advancement, until then we may know we have not attained true culture or true civilization. What we want is balance, balance in our thoughts, words and actions, and there cannot be any balance unless we take account of the spiritual. As long as we neglect that

side, as long as we look only without and never turn within to see what our true life is, perfect balance can never be reached. Let us strive for that; then even in the midst of all difficulties and conflicting ideals, we shall be able to maintain our peace; and not only shall we be able to keep peaceful ourselves, but we shall give peace to others as they are struggling in the darkness of the world for a little rest, a little consolation, a little happiness.

This is the great message of India to the world. This is the message of all the religious Teachers, Seers, Prophets and Saviours. And these messages are always living, always ready to inspire and help us if we will only open our hearts to their influence. So long, however, as we think that we are self-sufficient, so long as we only use one part of our being, the physical, we shall never realize the true blessing of life. Let us hope, then, as we go on acquiring knowledge of the physical realm, that we may also side by side with this gain knowledge of the spiritual realm, that God's hand may be with us, that we may never fail to keep in touch with Him.

If we do not take the spiritual life seriously, if we do not try to find that Reality which underlies our existence, then nothing can help or protect us. Whenever there is one-sided culture there is danger. Man is never strong enough to stand alone, for we know that the individual being is full of limitation. But there is something beneath which is Unlimited, Undying, Undecaying. The Aryan Sages proclaim that That which dwells within our heart, That which is the True Light, the Soul, "Sword cannot pierce It, fire cannot burn It, water cannot wet It, air cannot dry It." When we feel the living presence of that Spirit, when our consciousness is no longer confined to the physical plane, then we find another consciousness that may be called the Christ-Consciousness or the consciousness of Buddha, the Awakened

One. Then alone we can learn to live as Christ taught; then alone we can forgive—not only forgive, but we shall feel that we are actually one with every living thing, that our peace and our happiness are inseparably bound up with the peace and happiness of all God's children and that only in striving for the blessing of the whole, can we enjoy fullness of life. This realization of undivided unity forms the foundation of all true culture.

THE ONENESS OF THE SOUL

By Zina Partridge.

And now at peace, I meditate
  Upon the One Great Soul,
That pulsing through the Universe,
  Forevermore is God, the Whole.

Unwind! O web, that selfishness
  About me slowly spun;
Dissolve! O veil, that seemingly
  Divides to more than One.
All round throughout Thee, everywhere
  Breathes happiness, breathes peace,
In rythmic waves of harmony
  To bring my soul's release.
At one with Thee to pulse, Great Soul,
  I meditate, I pray;
Reborn in Thine effulgency
  I long to be, this day.

Be this the one and only thought
  Enshrined within my heart,
Until I know Thee manifest,
  At One, in every part.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT AND AN INDIAN SAGE

By Rai Sarat Chandra Das Bahadur, C. I. E.

Dandin or Dandamis was esteemed the chief of all the Brahmanas, as much excelling the rest in years as in wisdom. He it was who, when Onesicritus came to him with a message from Alexander, conferred with the Greek philosopher on the doctrines delivered by Socrates, Pythagoras, and Diogenes and readily confessed that they appeared to him to be very wise men. "In one thing only," said he, "I blame them, which is that they prefer law and custom to nature, which if they did not do, they would never be ashamed of going naked as we do." Dandamis was more steady in his resolution than Calanus, for he absolutely refused to visit Alexander upon any terms; and when Alexander's messenger told him that their King was the son of Jupiter, that he was master of the world and would reward him with great gifts if he listened to his proposal, but would otherwise cause him to be fixed to a cross, Dandamis answered that he did not believe he was the son of Jupiter, neither did he conceive that he really possessed everything, for if he did, he would be satisfied and not give himself or the rest of the world so much trouble; that as to his gifts, he neither needed nor desired them, and that even his threats made no impression on him. "For," said he, "if he should put me to death, he will only release my soul from this old decrepit body, which will pass into a freer and quieter state, so that I shall suffer nothing by the change."

Alexander had so high an opinion of the wisdom of the Brahmanas that instead of resenting the answer which Dandamis had sent him, he admired the courage and steady resolution of the man; nay, he carried his admiration so far as to write to this Brahmana, acquainting him that he had heard so many extraordinary things in relation to the wisdom

of their doctrines and their singular manner of living, that he was desirous of learning them from him. If he found in them that excellence which was reported, he was content to become his disciple. He went therefore with a few of his friends and attendants to the wood where the philosopher was and when he drew near it, he alighted from his horse, laid aside his crown and everything that had an appearance of pomp or show and went alone to the old Brahmana. Sitting down at his feet, he said: "God save you, Dandamis! I am come to you because you refused to come to me." "And to what purpose do you come?" asked the sage. "What is there in our solitudes that you can desire to carry away? What you want we have not; and what we have is not necessary to you. We honour God, love man, neglect gold and contemn death; you on the other hand fear death, honour gold, hate man and contemn God." "Teach us," replied Alexander, "some of your wisdom. They say that you are full of divinity and that you often confer with God Himself. Now I would willingly know in what you excel the Greeks; in what you are better and wiser than other men." "And I," returned Dandamis, "would willingly bestow on you what I have received from God but that I know that your bosom affords no room for such a gift. Your mind is filled with vast desires and insatiable avarice and a diabolical thirst for empire. You are desirous of ruling the oceans and conquering some part of the other world; and when you had no more to conquer, your desires would afflict you with sadness. How then is it possible that I should content you who, if all the world were subjected to your service, would not even then be at rest? You are made much like other men and yet you would obtain by force whatever mankind possesses; but, after all, you could occupy no more ground for yourself than you see me lying on or I see you sitting upon. I use the elements,

—air, water and earth, only as much as I need for bare sustenance and therefore whatever I have, I justly possess; for if you were possessed of all the rivers in the world, you could only drink water from them as I do. If you will but learn wisdom of me, you will want nothing; for he has all who desires no more than what he has. It is desire that is the mother of poverty, which you seek to cure without knowing the proper remedy; for whoever seeks to possess all things will never find what he seeks; moreover, meeting with no rest in what he possesses, but expecting it from what is yet to be possessed, he only tortures himself more and more. You cannot have the greatest wealth possible and enjoy it with the utmost pleasure unless you would live as I do; for then you could taste the wisdom I teach you. The heavens serve me for a canopy, the earth is my bed; I drink out of the river and the fields here supply me with food; I do not eat animals, like a lion, neither do the remains of animals consume in me and so make my body their sepulchre; I feed upon fruits that Nature gives me as I did on the milk my mother gave me. But you are desirous of knowing what it is I possess more than other men and how far I am wiser than others. I am a child of Nature. I live as I came from my mother's womb,—without riches and without care. I have always relied on the superior wisdom of God and I know what He will do by me. I know the whole future and interpret its secret workings far ahead. You on the other hand seek for prediction of things to come, because you understand not the works of God, which He shows you every hour."

All this Alexander heard patiently and without the least displeasure; he answered therefore the philosopher thus: "I am thoroughly sensible of the truth of all thou hast said; for, descending from a holy race, thou art here conveniently situated, where without any trouble thou enjoyest the great-

est pleasure during the whole circle of thy days and possessest all the riches of Nature in a perfect and uninterrupted peace. I on the other hand live in the midst of the tumult and toils for much. I fear even those who by their office ought to defend me from fear and seldom I raise the apprehensions of my enemies so high as those of my friends; for I am daily in greater dread of their treachery than of the force of my foes. Thus between the necessity of having guards for my safety and the dread that these very guards may deprive me of safety, I live in perpetual anxiety. My days are spent in distressing and destroying other peoples and in the nights I am filled with terror and suspicions lest I am taken by surprise and murdered by some secret enemy. I put to death those I fear, I become hateful; again, I am mild and gentle also. It is not in my power to quit the world and to live with you in the forests. It is impossible for me to quit the station I am in and therefore I hope that this will excuse me to God who placed me in this station and made me what I am. But thou, O wise and good man, who have heard my complaints and soothed my griefs by the wisdom of thy words, dissuading me from war and bloodshed, be pleased to accept the gifts I offer and do not contemn me so far as to reject the tributes I bring to thy wisdom."

As he spoke these words, the slaves, who waited with the presents, brought them in and spread before the sage a great variety of exquisitely wrought gold and silver vessels together with large quantities of oil and bread. At the sight of all this Dandamis could not help smiling. At last he delivered himself thus: "Who do you think could persuade the birds that haunt these woods to the use of gold and silver to sing the better for it? Or if this you conceive to be impossible, why should you judge me to be worse than they? Why should I accept from you what I cannot either eat or drink?

Why should I take what I cannot make use of? Why retain under my care what cannot contribute to my benefit and thus bind and ensnare myself who have hitherto been free? I desire not to purchase in any shape what in these solitudes I cannot sell; God bestows upon me here fruits on every side, which I pull and eat freely. God sells men nothing for gold, but He ever bestows His wisdom freely upon such as are able and qualified to receive it. I am covered with that garment with which my mother brought me forth. The air I freely breathe and honey cannot be sweeter to the taste than whatever from the relish of hunger I eat and drink. If these cakes were good by nature, why were they exposed to the fire? For my part, I suffer not that element to touch anything that I eat, any more than in the flesh of animals I choose to eat at second hand what they have eaten before. Take then away these cakes that are baked; but that I may not seem to despise everything you offer me, I am content to accept this oil."

Dandamis having said this, immediately rose and going into the wood gathered up a considerable quantity of dry sticks. Having piled them in a heap, he set fire to them and then turning to Alexander said: "The Brahmana hath all things and enjoyeth abundance, because he enjoyeth all he desireth." Then pouring the oil into the fire, while it burnt up fiercely, he sang a hymn to God, the Immortal Giver of all good things, thanking Him for the manifold gifts He had bestowed.

When Alexander had seen and heard all these things, he went away astonished, causing all his gifts, except the oil, to be carried back. Before he left, Dandamis gave him many other pieces of sound advice, desiring him to remember that the Brahmanas were such as himself and not such as Calanus, whom they esteemed worst of men for his having deserted their society to embrace the manners of the Greeks.

RELIGION AND RITUAL

All religions have a metaphysical side represented by doctrine and a practical side represented by ritual. A mere belief in the existence of the Divine, however rationally arrived at, cannot constitute religion, which implies also the establishment by means of suitable acts of a satisfactory relationship between the worshipper and the worshipped. But although belief and practice have to go hand in hand in all religions, the relative importance of doctrine and ritual may be seen to be different in different faiths. To the follower of Vedanta the realization of the divineness of human nature is the only end for which all desirable forms of outward practical worship may be allowed to exist; ritual and forms of worship have in themselves no value for him, they are only the means to an end. If the heart can be ripened so as to be full of divine sweetness without the help of forms, they may be altogether done away with. If not, let each man choose for himself the forms of worship that are best suited to his own spiritual advancement. The question of ritualistic conformity in religious matters is wholly outside the purview of Vedanta. It does not go to war against nonconformity, heterodoxy and heresy. For the attainment of the sublime God-realization of the Vedanta man has mainly to depend upon self-discipline and surrender to God.

For those, however, who still cling to the outer forms, the Vedic Scriptures in their *Karma-Kanda* give an endless variety of rituals and ceremonies, in which the Brahman becomes an important factor. Brahmanism, as originally designed, was a grand religious organization deeply influencing the society and the politics of the country, and giving the Brahman himself the first rank in society. By this organization the life of the Aryan man was parcelled out into four periods; and the every-day duties of each of these periods

were laid down with a marvellous fullness of details in authoritative law-books, so that nothing could be done by any Aryan of any rank or any age without religion being in some way connected with it. Further, the theoretical classification of society into four divisions obtained formal recognition.

It must be said to the credit of the Brahman caste that its leaders have all along recognized the incompatibility of spiritual supremacy with earthly pomp. Brahmanism made the life of the Brahman a severer course of discipline than that of any man of any other caste. It was a high ideal of self-culture and self-restraint that the Brahman placed before himself. "Throughout his whole life he practised a strict temperance,—drinking no wine, using a simple diet, curbing the desires, shut off from the tumults of war and his thoughts fixed on study and contemplation." —*Brahmavadin.*

VILWAMANGAL THE SAINT

Drama by Girish Chunder Ghose.

Rendered from The Bengalee specially for the "Message of the East."
(Continued from April number.)

Act III. Scene III.

On the River bank. Vilwamangal enters.

Vilwamangal.—My mind will not remain fixed. Very well, go where thou wilt. I will see how long thou dost wander. But, Tongue, do thou still repeat the name of the Lord.

[*He sits down, closing his eyes. Two women enter,—Ahalya, a merchant's wife and a neighbor.*]

Neighbor.—See, sister, see that queer man there.

Ahalya.—What are you saying? He must be a holy man, he is praying.

Vilwamangal.—Ouf! This is not a solitary spot. (*As he opens his eyes, they fall on Ahalya*) Eye, thou art most daring. Thou art the chief general of the lord of passion. In the guise of a friend, thou dost bring enemies into my

house and my deluded mind, filled ever with longing for pleasure, never suspects thy deceitfulness. There in the heart, on that throne which belongs to God, it places a serpent. That serpent stings, still the eye tempts with ever new allurements. The burned-out heart writhes with anguish, yet again it embraces that which stings. It fails to learn its lesson from hundreds of rebuffs and bitter disappointments; ever the eye persuades it, saying: "This is the treasure that will soothe thee." Such is the bondage of past impressions. But, mind, thou art only a brute, why should I find fault with thee? Go where the eye leads thee.

[*Vilwamangal goes out.*]

SCENE IV.

In front of Chintamani's home. The maid-servant and a false ascetic.

[*They plot together to poison Chintamani and steal all her money and jewels. As they go out, Chintamani enters.*]

Chintamani (*to herself*).—The day is gone and night is come. Shall I sleep alone in this house? If tempted by my wealth, someone should enter and kill me, then I should lose this life as well as all hope of the hereafter. Heart, in order to hoard money thou hast caused much pain to others and today that wealth makes thee fear to live in thine own house. When Vilwamangal was here, I never felt any such anxiety. His tender care made me forget that I was alone and forsaken. Where shall I go? Who will save this dreadful sinner? I shall go to Vilwamangal. He is a great saint. He will not hate me. He will show me the way of salvation. But alas! I am a woman, all alone. Where shall I go? How shall I seek? Then too I have a body to feed.

[*Pagalini enters.*]

Pagalini.—Child, I have been watching you. See, see, yonder jackal is eating his fill. I too always get enough to

eat and the birds find all the food they want. I know, Child, that He always provides.

Chintamani.—Mother, Mother, come into my house.

Pagalini.—No, I shall not go into houses any more. He is not there. Never again shall I enter a house. My house is empty.

Chintamani.—Mother, you are right. I also fear to enter the house.

Pagalini.—Poison, poison, poison! Come away, Child, come away. [*Beggar enters.*]

Beggar.—Aha! She's not mad. She is telling everything right. (*To Chintamani*) Lady, every word she says is absolutely true. (*To Pagalini*) Mother, who are you?

Pagalini.—My Lord has allured me into this universe. I have wandered madly through this world, but I cannot find Him. Where shall I find Him? Who will tell me? Wherever I am when day ends, that is my home. My bed is the soft grass-covered earth, the sky is the roof over my head.

Chintamani.—Who is your Lord?

Pagalini.—My Lord is He, He. There is no one but He, no one. I am His servant, Child, His servant am I. I cannot stay any longer in houses. Poison, poison, poison! Come away, come away, my child.

Beggar (*to himself*).—Strange! She knows, yet she's mad. (*To Chintamani*) Lady, don't think she's mad. All that she says is true. I was behind a bush and overheard everything. Thaki, your maid-servant, and that, impostor thinking that you had lost your mind, were plotting to mix poison in your milk. Then when you were dead, they meant to dig a hole and bury you.

Chintamani.—Poison! The mind knows everything instinctively. Thaki thinks that I am mad! O foolish mind, see how little money is thy friend!

Pagalini.—Child, I live under a tree; I never put out my hand to beg for anything and when the goddess of wealth comes, I tell her: "Go, go away. If you come, then I shall never find Him." Come, Child, come; we shall stay no more in the house, no more in houses.

Chintamani.—Full of poison is this world. Why then cling to it any more? Here I have found a companion. So long I have always doubted everyone. Come, Pagalini, I shall put my trust in you today and follow you as your shadow. Why, why, I know not why a glimmer of hope is rising in my heart. Mother, true it is that beasts in the forest find food and the birds in the air, for them too earth provides. Why then fear? With you I take refuge. Tell me, Mother, where shall I go? Where will you lead me?

Pagalini.—Come, come, we shall go to the bank of the Jamuna.

Chintamani.—Go, Mother, I will follow you. (*She takes out her keys and throws them away.*)

Pagalini.—Give them to me.

Chintamani.—There they are, Mother.

Pagalini (*addressing the beggar*).—Here, you take them.

Beggar.—What's this? Is she going away leaving everything? Ah! foolish me, for whose sake shall I hoard? I think I'll follow them. (*He throws away the keys*) Certainly I'll find something to eat. I'll take the Name of the Lord and wander about; but I wonder whether I shall be able to resist temptation? But there is the Divine Mother. Just now Chintamani has been saved by Her from the jaws of death. Shall I not be saved too?

SCENE V.

In front of a merchant's house. Vilwamangal is seated on the door-step. The merchant enters.

Merchant.—Who are you?

Vilwamangal.—I am a traveller.

Merchant.—Why are you in this condition? Where is your home?

Vilwamangal.—Wherever I go, that is my home.

Merchant.—Do you not lead a householder's life?

Vilwamangal.—No.

Merchant.—Then accept today my hospitality.

Vilwamangal.—For that purpose I have come here.

Merchant.—It is indeed a great piece of good fortune for me. Welcome.

* * * * *

SCENE VI.

Interior of the merchant's house. The merchant's wife Ahalya and her maid Mangala seated.

Ahalya.—Mangala, go again and try to persuade that strange man to eat something.

Mangala.—I can't do it. He's mad. He will not speak, he doesn't even answer me.

Ahalya.—The day is over, evening is come. Go, my child, go once more. If the master of the house finds out that a guest has been sitting so long at the door without eating, he will not even look at my face; and it is almost time for him to return.

Mangala.—Hm! Not look at your face? I'll just speak out and tell him that this miserable man sat there with his lips tight together. Just think, my mistress has not tasted food the whole day (because he would not eat).

[*Merchant enters.*]

Merchant.—Mangala, go and when our honored guest has finished his meal, bring him here.

[*Maid-servant goes out.*]

Merchant.—Beloved, today as I behold thee in all thy richest jewels and silken garments, my heart is filled with exceeding joy. Blessed indeed is thy loveliness. Dearest, listen to my words with all attention. Virtue is the chief end of this life and this world is indeed a place of trial to test our strength. One should guard one's virtue with the greatest care. The highest virtue is to follow Truth. Thou knowest, my chaste wife, when we built this house, we made a vow together that we should refuse no guest coming to our door. Through God's grace thus far we have carried out our vow, but today by the will of God the test has come. Behold, a beggar, poor, miserable, clad in rags, coming to our door, has asked to see thee alone.

Ahalya.—What is this thou askest, my lord?

Merchant.—I know that thou hast given me thy body, mind and heart. Thou hast given me everything, my beloved one, and thou hast never asked anything in return. Thou art mine. Why oppose me? Truth alone is real. Naught else is there. If a guest is turned away, the vow of Truth will be broken. Thy husband, for whose welfare thou art so eager, will be proved false (to his vow). We should have considered this when we built our home and made this vow together in secret: "that no guest should be turned away from our door." And we called upon Virtue itself as witness. If today we break this promise, then Truth will not prevail.

[*Mangala enters.*]

Mangala.—Master, the guest is standing without in the hall.

Merchant.—Enter, enter, honored sir.

[*Vilwamangal enters.*]

Merchant.—This is my wife and your servant.

[*He goes out.*]

Ahalya.—Revered Sir, be seated on the couch.

Vilwamangal.—No, I merely wish to look at you and I can do that from here. (*To himself*) Think, O mind, how these eyes have made thee dance. Once thou wert the son of a Brahman, then at the behest of these eyes thou wast made the slave of a dancing-girl. On the day of thy father's memorial rites, impatient at heart, in dense darkness, in storm and thunder, thou didst fight with the angry waves and save thy life by seizing a floating corpse; thou didst mistake a serpent for a rope! So blind have thine eyes made thee! I laugh when I think how the spirit of renunciation suddenly rose within thee. Thou didst go away with just the one garment, crying out: "Who is mine? Where is my Lord?" And thou wert restless with longing as if full of spiritual yearning! Thou didst sit on the bank of the river like a saint plunged in deep meditation; but hearing the tinkling of anklets, thou didst open thine eyes and look. See how mad thou art become again through the deceit of thine eyes. Thou dost boast of these eyes. Every day thou dost fear lest thou mayest lose these jewels. But behold what they have done for thee. Verily that decaying corpse, which when thou wert struggling for life thou didst embrace, mistaking it for a log—like that will this body too be dissolved. All this beauty is only external. Understand, mind, what thine eyes are! They see only what is unreal and tell thee to believe it real. How long wilt thou remain under their deluding influence? (*Aloud, to Ahalya*) Give me two pins from your hair. (*Ahalya gives them to him*) Mother, go and tell your husband that I am your mad child. Go, mother.

Ahalya.—Who is this great soul?

[*She goes out.*]

Vilwamangal.—Mind, thou dost still cling to these eyes? They are thine enemies, destroy them. I shall give thee better eyes, by which thou shalt behold the reality of God

and see all else as unreal. Away, away, false eyes! (*He pierces them with the pins*) Now go my feet where you will.

(To be continued.)

REPORTS

The two Sunday services at 11 A. M and 5 P. M. will continue as heretofore at The Vedanta Centre of Boston, also the Tuesday Evening Class. Instead of the regular Yoga Class on Thursday Evening, a short Devotional Service with a brief instruction will be held for the members.

As the summer advances it is gratifying to note that so far there has been no decrease in the attendance at any of the meetings. On the contrary an unusual number of strangers have been coming to the Centre. Among the lectures delivered by the Swami Paramananda during the month of June those on "Spiritual Healing" and "Divine Motherhood" awakened special interest and it is probable that both will appear later in "The Message of the East." "The power of healing," the Swami said, "is inseparable from saintliness—as inseparable as the flower and its fragrance. It has always been manifested in the lives of the great Seers and Holy Ones. But true spiritual healing can never be practised for material gain. The greatest spiritual healers manifest their power naturally and spontaneously, being free from all self-consciousness and personal motive. We see this in the life of Christ. Whenever He performed an act of healing He gave all the glory to His Father in Heaven, claiming nothing for Himself. When this vital factor is forgotten, it becomes very dangerous both for the one who seeks to be healed and for the one who tries to heal. Healing is a God-given power and only those who recognize this and yield themselves up wholly to be selfless instruments in His hands, asking no return, can hope to acquire or hold the power."

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. IV. AUGUST, 1915 No. 8

TOLERANCE

By Swami Paramananda.

Lord Krishna declares in the Gita: "He who hates no living creature and is kind and compassionate to all, who is free from selfish desires and egotism, equal-minded in pleasure and pain, loving and forgiving, he is ever dear to Me." Again we find Lord Buddha teaching his disciples: "Not to blame, not to strike, but to live restrained under the law and to dwell on the Highest." "You must so adjust your heart that you long for the welfare of all beings, including the happiness of your enemies. If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me. Let us live happily then, not hating those who hate us. Among men who hate us, let us dwell free from hatred." Then when we turn to the Bible, we read the following words of Jesus the Christ: "Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you. Pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

Although these sayings are from widely different sources, although there is a vast difference in the time when they were spoken, yet through them all there runs the same

sublime note of tolerance. The true spirit of religion always leads to tolerance and universality. It enables one to rise above narrow prejudice and view Truth apart from the fictitious barriers of doctrine, dogma, race and creed. Therefore whenever scepticism rises in our mind regarding religion, as we see intolerance and war among men everywhere, we must stop and differentiate between the real spirit of religion and what men call religion. "As the different streams having their sources in different places, all mingle their waters in the great sea, O Lord; similarly the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they may appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee."

Such is the attitude of Vedanta as voiced in an ancient Sanskrit prayer. It does not say: "I know that I am right and that you are wrong. I know that my point of view is superior, yet I am willing to bear with what you think and say." Tolerance as taught in the Vedanta is not thus based on the spirit of condescension or compromise, but upon realizing that there is an underlying harmony in all the ideals of the world, a thread which runs through all individual souls. And when we perceive this subtle thread which connects us with every living thing, we no longer rise one against the other.

We hear so much about universality, about the brotherhood of man, but can we realize it? Can it ever be accomplished by destroying the diversity of life; by levelling human differences? No, that would be impossible. There is, however, another way by which we can preserve every individual variation, all the infinite variety of life, and that is by finding the unity behind. It is not by trying to convert all people to one religion that universal brotherhood will be reached. It is not by forming a group or society,

or by outside propaganda; it is by realizing oneness in the heart of our hearts. When there is no longer hatred there, when we no longer desire to strike or destroy or denounce, when our understanding leads us to such a height of spiritual wisdom that we can look upon even those who differ most from us as manifestations of the same Infinite Being in other garbs, then we may hope to possess the true spirit of tolerance and universal brotherhood. "When a man is on the plains," Sri Ramakrishna says, "he sees the lowly grass and the mighty pine tree and thinks: 'How tall is the tree and how small is the grass!' But when he ascends the mountain and looks from its high peak upon the plains below, the mighty pine tree and the lowly grass blend into one indistinguishable mass of verdure."

Universality is a question of realization in the individual consciousness. Man must first feel the spirit of God within his own heart before he can hope to exhibit tolerance and love in the outside universe. He must be able to see in all the different phases of existence the same All-pervading Spirit shining through, then will he rise above hatred and narrowness and embrace all men as his brothers. The man who tries to force one ideal on the whole human race will inevitably awaken antagonism and strife, as well as unsettle the understanding of many who cannot accept his point of view but who can travel easily along some other path more natural to them; for we are not all alike in our capacity and tendencies. Therefore a religion or philosophy, to be universal, must have many aspects. It must have infinite scope for tolerance and innumerable methods by which people may reach the same ultimate goal.

Nothing should be destroyed. There must be no room for denunciation, since Infinity is boundless, limitless, un-

fathomable. "God is One. Truth is One. The Infinite Spirit is One, although men may call Him by various names and define Him according to their comprehension." This man sees Him in one form, that one in another. So why quarrel? Why be intolerant? Why not be reasonable and no longer try to confine the Infinite within some one finite vision? We must realize that the Limitless can never be limited to one aspect. The Spirit of God is never absent from any living creature, for He is all-pervading. When each one can follow his own special path with absolute devotion and realize the spirit of that, he will find that all other paths are leading to the same Supreme Being.

All the divisions we see are only apparent; all the different paths prescribed for our spiritual unfoldment, although they may appear very divergent, yet their aim is only one—to lead man to the Universal Goal. So we should not dispute over external forms and differences, but we should be watchful that we follow the spirit. Religion must give us a new birth. It must give birth to the soul. It must awaken our inner nature; and when that has been accomplished, it matters not by what method it has been achieved. All earnest, sincere effort must lead to the one Absolute Spirit of the Universe, Who shines upon all living beings whether they come from the East or the West. When we realize that spirit in our hearts, then we may talk of tolerance and universality. The work must begin in our own soul. Our heart must be the centre from which that Divine Light will radiate in the form of love and wisdom—love which knows no hatred and wisdom which is never deceived by apparent differences. When such love and such wisdom will become inseparable parts of our being, then alone shall we ourselves find peace and be able to bestow peace on our fellow beings.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

So long as the bee is outside the petals of the lily and has not tasted the sweetness of its honey, it hovers round the flower emitting a buzzing sound; but when it is inside the flower, it noiselessly drinks its nectar. Similarly, so long as a man quarrels and disputes about doctrines and dogmas, he has not tasted the nectar of true faith; when he has tasted it, he becomes quiet and full of peace.

—Sri Ramakrishna.

The soul does violence to itself when it turns away from any man, or even moves towards him with the intention of injuring, such as are the souls of those who are angry. The soul does violence to itself when it is overpowered by pleasure or pain. . . . Suppose that men kill thee, cut thee in pieces, curse thee. What then can these things do to prevent thy mind from remaining pure, wise, sober, just? If a man should stand by a limpid pure spring and curse it, the spring never ceases sending up potable water, and if he should cast clay into it or filth, it will speedily disperse them and wash them out, and will not be at all polluted. How then shalt thou possess a perpetual fountain? By forming thyself hourly to freedom conjoined with contentment, simplicity and modesty. Be like the promontory against which the waves continually break, but it stands firm and tames the fury of the waters around it.

—Marcus Aurelius.

The superior man wishes to be slow in his words and earnest in his conduct. The superior man, in the world, does not set his mind for anything or against anything; what is right he will follow. A man should say, I am not concerned that I have no place—I am concerned how I may fit myself for one. I am not concerned that I am not known—I seek to be worthy to be known. *—Confucius.*

Mighty of heart, mighty of mind, magnanimous: to be this is indeed to be great in life; to become this increasingly is indeed to advance in life—in life itself, not in the trappings of it. An education of soul is possible which in itself is advancement in life—any other may perhaps be advancement in death. He only is advancing in life whose heart is growing softer, whose blood warmer, whose brain quicker, whose spirit is entering into living peace. And they who have this life in them are the true lords of the earth—they and they only!

—*John Ruskin.*

In the opinion of the prudent he is no hero that can dare to combat a furious elephant; but that man is in truth a hero who, when provoked to anger, will not speak intemperately. I have heard that the heroes on the path of God will not distress the hearts even of their enemies. How canst thou attain this dignified station who art at strife and warfare with thy friends?

—*Saadi (Sufi).*

He by whom the world is not afflicted and who is not afflicted by the world, who is free from envy, fear and anxiety, he is dear to Me (the Lord). He who is the same to friend and foe, and also in honor and dishonor, the same in pleasure and pain, free from all attachments; he who is alike in praise and blame, is silent, content with everything, steady-minded, such a devoted soul is dear to Me.

—*Sri Krishna.*

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

—*St. Paul.*

THE POWER OF NON-RESISTANCE

By Sister Devamata.

Endurance is one of the chief measures of value in life. The material or construction or machine that can outlast all others gains the highest place. Inventor, artist, writer, all are dreaming of producing something that will endure; and the whole of evolution seems directed to that one end. But how does Nature accomplish it? By non-resistance. The tree bends and sways in the storm; the metal expands and contracts with each variation of temperature; the little fish develops wings and, instead of giving battle, soars above its pursuing enemy; the child lets itself go and survives countless falls, while that house only stands in the tornado's path whose windows are open to let the wind sweep through.

This law of the natural world is also the law of the moral and spiritual planes. In calm non-resistance lies man's greatest strength. For that reason Christ taught: "If a man strike you on the one cheek, turn to him the other." He would never have advocated a course that stood for weakness or defeat, but He knew that the man who can turn his energies towards controlling his own passions instead of expending them in an answering blow will in the end prove master of the situation. As Buddha declares: "If one man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men and if another conquer himself, he is the greatest of conquerors. Not even a god could change into defeat the victory of a man who has vanquished himself and always lives under restraint."

The practice of non-resistance means conservation of energy, accumulation of power, clear vision, wise and carefully directed action, all the qualities, in fact, which make for strength. The man who habitually resists and battles

is rent and broken as inevitably as is the metal which resists the rise and fall of atmospheric pressure. Every act of resistance represents enormous wear and tear on the physical organism. In material things it is easy to see that the less the friction, the greater the durability. If car wheel and rail are perfectly smooth, the train can roll over the track with a minimum of wear; but let either grow rough and deterioration takes place rapidly. No less is this the case with the human mind and body. Nothing so soon destroys both as continued friction. Therefore the problem of life, quite as much as of mechanics, becomes how to reduce friction, and in both cases it is accomplished by decreasing resistance.

The great majority of people, however, fear that if they begin to practice non-resistance they will be over-ridden in the struggle of life. Actually, however, this is not the case. If an angry man hurls himself against you and you step aside, it is he who falls, not you. True non-resistance does not mean cowardice or meek inaction, but controlled strength; the non-resistance we see in nature, which consists in a proper combination of elasticity and firmness—an ability to be pliable on the surface, but fixed at the root. It means a willingness to yield in the non-essentials, to hold fast in the essentials; to admit great latitude in variety of expression, while maintaining uncompromising loyalty to the Truth expressed; above all, a willingness to play fair, to care more for right than for our own rights, to be deliberate, thoughtful and generous. Nor is the principle different for nations than for individuals. The action of the mass is merely the cumulative result of the tendencies of the individuals who go to make it up; and the frightful war-tragedy, on which the world looks today, is only the logical and inevitable consequence of the fierce warfare of indi-

vidual and collective competition which has shaped the whole face of modern civilization. Is it to cease? Then it will not be by organizing Peace Parties or International Congresses, but by teaching each individual in every community to reorganize his own life and ideals.

The man of understanding never feels the need to resist, because he knows that "the True prevails, not the untrue," that the Real can never be destroyed, that no human being can be cheated of his own. Therefore he joins himself with the great cosmic forces and awaits the fulfilment of the law. He detaches himself from petty personal ends, from small selfish interests, and at once all cause of friction is eliminated, because he no longer runs counter to his neighbor and hence never arouses his antagonism. But this does not imply that he has retired from the field of activity. He has merely adopted a larger standard of action and removed unnecessary obstructions from his path.

The habit of non-resistance, however, cannot be acquired all at once. It must be developed gradually by regular practice, a practice based on definite method as truly as the practice of painting or music. We must reduce our task to its component parts and deal separately with each part. What is it that arouses our resistance and produces so much friction? The world, of course, in some form. Upon what does this created world rest? Upon time, space and causation. Manifestation necessitates a beginning in time, form means outline in space, and every effect presupposes a cause. Therefore our ceaseless struggles are in reality against these fundamental elements of creation,—time, space and causation.

At this moment we are every one of us resisting time. That is why we are so hurried, so worn and nervous. There is scarcely anyone who does not work with one

hand and with the other hold back the flying minutes, scarcely one who does not try to cheat the clock and double the length of each hour. We call upon the sun to stand still in the heavens while we pile up engagement on engagement, task on task, imagining that we are more useful and important if we do twenty things in a day breathlessly, even perforce imperfectly, than if we did only ten calmly and well. We must learn to check this mad on-rush. Let the sun pursue its quiet revolution. Let us ask of each hour no more than it can justly give us. Instead of trying to stretch its measure, let us rather reduce the number of our daily occupations. Having many interests is not a sign of greatness, multiplying duties is not a proof of spirituality. The spiritual life is the life of doing a few things thoughtfully and humbly in the sight of God. Should we lay a little less emphasis on our outer obligations and begin to fulfill a few of those long-neglected inner duties to our soul and God, we should see how quickly our daily routine would grow simple and free from feverish haste.

All these multifarious demands upon us are self-created. God did not bring any soul into this world with an engagement book written full. It is we ourselves who have woven this tangled web of obligations by our ever-changing desires and ambitions, or by our misapprehension of what is true benefit to mankind. We are so strenuous and hurried, not because there is not time enough, but because we have forgotten that we are living in Eternity. We should order our life more by routine, less by time; and we should make that routine as the engineer lays a track—with spaces between the rails to allow for expansion. How then shall we accomplish all that is to be done? We shall accomplish infinitely more, because our whole mind will belong to the one task in hand. Now we have broken ourselves into a hundred pieces

and have only one small piece for the immediate duty. Our thought is busy with what has been crowded out of the hours that lie behind us and with all that must be crowded into the hours before us. We are trying to calculate and remember a multitude of things; preparing for another task while doing this one, because there is no hope of a quiet space between. If, on the contrary, we would but learn to gather up the whole of ourselves into the present moment and, laying down our watches, say: "In all the world at this instant I have only this one thing to do, and my entire energy and interest shall go into it," we should have such power that our work would be accomplished, not only in half the time, but with an efficiency that would amaze us. When there come, as there must to everyone, periods of extreme pressure, then let us do as the bather in the ocean when a high wave rolls in,—cling to the life line and wait for it to pass. When time threatens to engulf us, let us hold fast to the thought of Eternity and remember that we live and move in That. Soon our breathlessness will leave us and we shall regain our quiet poise.

In our efforts to focus all our energy on each succeeding moment, however, we must guard against the error of magnifying its importance. Too often we lose our sense of proportion and let the passing experience of joy or sorrow loom so large that it blocks our higher vision. We see it as a finality, a something that stretches on in endless perspective. But what is the gravest happening to the soul, in whose calendar "a thousand years are as a day"? Scarcely more than a flash. We measure it up so large because we are looking at the little things of life. Let us begin to fix our gaze on bigger things,—on this vast universe of revolving solar systems, in which this earth counts merely as a geometric point without length, breadth or magnitude; on the eons and cycles and centuries that have rolled on in the slow work of evolution;

on the countless lives and forms through which the soul has passed in its journey back to God: let us turn our eyes on these vaster things and the event of today will shrink to its proper size.

Next we must withdraw from this feverish battle to conquer space. To mount on wheels and cover ground has become the ruling ambition of the modern mind. Every day the race between miles and minutes is growing hotter, and in the contest all the dignity, the grace and beauty of life are being sacrificed. Our homes have become mere bases of supply, places where we recharge our batteries and start on again. The family comes together as friends meet at a railroad station, each hurrying to catch his train. Rapid transit has not relieved the pressure. It merely tempts us to go further afield. The mania for skimming over the earth's surface has taught men to move over the surface of their minds, to do all things superficially. The habit of profound thought is gone. Man seeks escape from himself in change and motion. He runs away from his problems. When grief or misfortune overtakes him, he flies to another continent to forget it; a second loss sends him adrift again, until he is like the Flying Dutchman driven on the high seas here and there waiting for a true heart or a wise soul to save him. Would he but turn his steps to his own fireside, go into his closet, close the door and try to be still, he would find a permanent solace for all his pain and unrest. Sometimes for this reason an illness proves a blessing to us, because it keeps us at home and allows us to become acquainted with ourselves. It enables us for a season to forget time and space and ponder on Eternity and Infinity.

"It is for want of self-culture," Emerson writes, "that the idol of travelling, the idol of Italy, of England, of Egypt, remains for all educated Americans. They who made England,

Italy, or Greece venerable in the imagination did so not by rambling round creation as a moth round a lamp, but by sticking fast where they were, like an axis of the earth. The soul is no traveller; the wise man stays at home with his soul; and when his necessities, his duties, or any occasion call him from his house, or into foreign lands, he is at home still, and is not gadding abroad from himself, and shall make men sensible by the expression of his countenance, that he goes the missionary of wisdom and virtue, and visits cities and men like a sovereign, and not like an interloper or a valet."

Like a sovereign, too, he faces life. He alone who has cultivated a taste for solitude and quiet contemplation, who has learned the joy of those far inner journeys to the secret places of the Most High, can stand unmoved amid the shifting fortunes of this outer world. The rest of us beat ourselves to weariness against the stern accomplishment of the law; for all our discontent, our suffering and disappointment mean nothing less than blind resistance of causation. We demand of destiny results we have not earned; we refuse to accept the consequences of our own actions; we are envious and rebellious if we reap tares and our neighbor wheat, forgetting that the harvest is the natural fruit of the sowing. We base our happiness on that which dies, and cry out in anguish when death snatches it. We allow ourselves to be irritable and moody, critical and self-absorbed, then resent the indifference and selfishness of others. We are unwilling to admit that all these conditions are only the reactions of our own actions. If, on the contrary, instead of warring against this inevitable law, we should ally ourselves with it, we could in a short time transform our character and environment and gain just the results we covet. Are we eager for happier surroundings, for greater talent, for conditions more favorable to our aspirations? We have only to set to work and earn them.

Nothing can keep from us that which we have made our

own by earnest effort, as nothing can give us what is not justly ours. Law and order govern the course of every atom in the universe. Creation is like a great machine in which each part has its special place and function, the whole impelled by one central force. When we try to move according to our individual will without regard to the universal law, we strain and wrench the mechanism and cause disaster to ourselves and others. Yet nature is so elastic that up to a certain point we are allowed our wayward course. If, however, we persist beyond that, then we are violently drawn back into our proper place and the readjustment manifests itself by some great upheaval in our outer life. Our own nature, that which we have made ourselves, determines just where we belong and only there can we live in harmony with the cosmic whole. Therefore "Better one's own duty, though devoid of merit," the Bhagavad-Gita tells us, "than the duty of another, well performed. Better is death in following one's own duty; the duty of another is full of danger." If today, however, our place or duty is distasteful to us, tomorrow, by altering our nature, we can deserve another and more congenial one.

To do this, however, we must, as Epictetus wisely admonishes: "Require not things to happen as we wish, but wish them to happen as they do happen, and we shall go on well." Quiet acceptance of things as they are is the first step. When circumstances or people cross us, let us say: "What of it? This is nothing lasting, and I can turn elsewhere for my happiness." This attitude will at once bring a peaceful, relaxed state of mind which will make it possible for us without effort to speak the word or do the act that will change the whole situation; for there is as exact a science of moral as of physical chemistry, and the soft answer or the wise deed will turn away wrath or misfortune as surely as an alkali will counteract an acid.

This practice of non-attachment,—of keeping our values true and giving way always to the larger point of view—will lead us gradually to that supreme form of non-resistance, surrender to God. The Divine is pressing on us from all sides. Through the ages It has sought to make Its presence felt by impelling us to ever higher grades of manifested life. But we are resisting that upward impulse, too jealous of our human estate, too fearful for our human duties and relations to yield ourselves up to the great on-pushing Power. We may believe that we long for Truth or God, but what we are gives the measure of our desire; for at this moment we possess actually as much of God as we really want, just as we have in our lungs the amount of air we care to breathe. He is within us and all about us, waiting to give Himself in fulness to us. It is because we are resisting Him, warring against His Will and Love and Wisdom, that we are not God-conscious today. Nor can we hope to gain the Vision or attain to peace so long as we persist in our unreasoning battle. The lesser can never swallow up the greater, the finite can never overcome the Infinite, the ego can never push out God. Therefore so long as we hold to our individual will, two principles will continue to struggle for dominion within us. Let us, however, cease our childish rebellion and, opening wide the door of our heart to the Universal Lord, bid Him enter there as Ruler; in an instant a flood of Divine Consciousness will flow in and, sweeping away all our small human limitations, will make us at one with the Infinite and Eternal Cause of all things.

Experience has two ways of crushing us—by refusing our wishes and by fulfilling them. But he who only wills what God wills escapes both catastrophes.

—*Henri Frederic Amiel.*

STORY OF DIRGHAYU

From the Buddhistic Scriptures.

Buddha thus spoke to his disciples:

There lived in ancient times a powerful king named Brahmadatta of Kashi. Covetting the realm of Dirgheti of Kosala, he determined to make war on him, saying: "The kingdom of Kosala is small and Dirgheti will not be able to withstand my strong army." So he marched upon Kosala and Dirgheti, realizing that resistance was useless, fled with his queen and after long wandering finally took refuge in a simple potter's cottage outside Benares. Here the queen bore him a son, to whom they gave the name of Dirghayu.

When Dirghayu had grown into manhood, the father thought within himself: "Should the king Brahmadatta find us, he will kill us all three"; so he sent his son away into safety. The youth had received a careful education from his father, and he now applied himself diligently to learn all the arts. In the meanwhile the former barber of Dirgheti, who now dwelt at Benares, one day saw the king and, recognizing his former master, betrayed his whereabouts to Brahmadatta for a sum of money. At once Brahmadatta sent his officers to seize the king and queen and carry them to the place of execution. As the captive king was being led through the streets of Benares, he saw his son, who was on his way to pay a visit to his parents. Careful not to disclose his presence, yet anxious to give him a parting counsel, he cried out: "O Dirghayu, do not look long, do not look short, for not by hatred is hatred overcome; hatred is overcome by non-hatred only."

King Dirgheti was executed with his wife, but Dirghayu brought wine and made the guards drunk. Then when night was come, he carried the bodies of his mother and father to the funeral pyre and burned them with all due honor and re-

ligious rites. The king Brahmadatta, hearing this, exclaimed fearfully: "Some day the son of Dirgheti will revenge the death of his parents."

Dirghayu went to the forest and gave himself up to bitter mourning. Soon, however, he wiped away his tears and returned to Benares. Here, learning that an elephant keeper was needed in King Brahmadatta's stable, he eagerly sought and secured the place. Not long after it happened that the king heard a strangely sweet voice ringing through the still night air, and, hearing that the singer was one of his own hirelings, he ordered the young man to appear before him. Being much pleased with Dirghayu, he transferred him to service in the royal palace. Then observing how wise, efficient and modest was the youth in his behavior, he soon advanced him to a position of great trust.

One day when the king went hunting, he became separated from his retinue and found himself alone with Dirghayu. Weary with his long chase, he lay down to rest with his head in his servant's lap and fell asleep. At once the thought came to Dirghayu: "This king has robbed us of our kingdom and slain my father and mother. The hour of revenge has come." And he drew his sword from its sheath. But as he did so the last words of his father rose in his mind: "Do not look long. Do not look short. For not by hatred is hatred overcome. Hatred is overcome by non-hatred only." Remembering this, he put up his sword.

The king grew restless in his sleep and awoke quivering with terror. Dirghayu asked: "Why, O king, are you thus affrighted?" And Brahmadatta replied: "My sleep is often restless because I dream that young Dirghayu seeks to slay me with his sword. Just now I dreamed the dream again. That is why I awoke in such terror and alarm."

Then the youth, laying his left hand on the king's head and

drawing his sword with his right hand, said: "I am Dirghayu, the son of King Dirgheti, whom you slew. The hour for vengeance is here." The king, defenceless and at the mercy of his servant, raised his hands and cried: "Grant me my life, my dear Dirghayu! Grant me my life!" Dirghayu replied: "If I grant you your life, then mine will be endangered by you. You must also grant me my life." The king gave answer: "If you spare my life, then I will grant you yours." King Brahamadatta and young Dirghayu then clasped hands and swore an oath never to do harm one to the other.

The king inquired of Dirghayu: "Why did your father say to you in the hour of death, 'Do not look long, do not look short; for hatred is not overcome by hatred. Hatred is overcome by non-hatred alone.' What did he mean by these words?" Dirghayu replied: "When my father said, 'Do not look long,' he meant, Let not your hatred last long. And when my father said: 'Do not look short,' he meant, Do not be hasty to fall out with your friends. And when he said: 'Not by hatred is hatred overcome; hatred is overcome by non-hatred only,' he meant this: You have slain my father and mother. If because of this I should deprive you of your life, then your followers would deprive me of my life, and again my supporters would deprive them of their life; thus there would be no end to hatred on both sides. But now, O king. you have granted me my life and I have granted you your life; thus by non-hatred all hatred has been appeased."

King Brahmadatta thought within himself: "How wise is young Dirghayu that he thus understands the hidden meaning of his father's words." So he restored to Dirghayu his kingdom and gave him his daughter in marriage.

Now, O monks, concluded Buddha, if such is the forbearance and gentleness of kings who wield a scepter and bear a sword, so much more, O monks, must you let your light shine

before the world that you, having embraced the religious life according to so well-taught a doctrine and discipline, are seen to be forbearing and mild.

NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS

From the Sanskrit. Hitherto Unpublished Translation

By Swami Vivekananda.

(Continued from May number.)

Chapter IV.

1. The nature of love is inexpressible.

2. As the dumb man cannot express what he tastes, but his actions betray his feelings, so man cannot express this love in words, but his actions betray it.

3. In some "vessels" it is expressed.

4. Beyond all qualities, all desires, ever increasing, unbroken, finest perception is love.

5. When a man gets this love he sees love everywhere, he hears love everywhere, he talks love everywhere, he thinks love everywhere.

6. According to the qualities or conditions, this love manifests itself differently:

7. The qualities are:—"Tamas" (dullness, heaviness), "rajas" (restlessness, activity), "sattva" (serenity, purity); and the conditions are:—"Arta" (sickness), "artati" (wanting something), "jynasa" (searching truth), "gnani" (knower).

8. Of these the latter are higher than the preceding ones.

9. Bhakti is the easiest way of worship.

10. It is its own proof and does not require any other.

11. Its nature is peace and perfect bliss.

12. Bhakti never seeks to injure any one or anything, not even the popular modes of worship.

13. Conversation about lust, or doubt of God, or about one's enemies must not be listened to.

14. Egotism, pride, etc., must be given up.

15. If those passions cannot be controlled, place them upon God, and place all your actions on Him.

16. Merging the trinity of Love, Lover and Beloved, worship God as His eternal servant, His eternal bride,—thus love is to be made unto God.

Chapter V.

1. That love is highest which is concentrated upon God.

2. When such speak of God, their voices stick in their throats, they cry and weep, and it is they who give holy places their holiness; they make good works, good books better, because they are permeated with God.

3. When a man loves God so much, his fore-fathers rejoice, the gods dance, and the earth gets a Master!

4. To such lovers there is no difference of caste, sex, knowledge, form, birth or wealth.

5. Because they are all God's.

6. Arguments are to be avoided;

7. Because there is no end to them and they lead to no satisfactory result.

8. Read books treating of this love and do deeds which increase it.

9. Giving up all desires of pleasure and pain, gain and loss, worship God day and night. Not a moment is to be spent in vain.

10. "Ahimsa" (not killing), truthfulness, purity, mercy and godliness are always to be kept.

11. Giving up all other thoughts, the whole mind day and night worships God. Thus being worshipped day and night, He reveals Himself and makes His worshippers feel Him.

12. In past, present and future, *Love is greatest!*

Thus following the ancient sages, we have dared to preach

the doctrine of *Love,* without fearing the jeers of the world.

Narada stands out, among the holy saints and illumined Sages of Aryan India, as one of the greatest God-lovers the world has ever known. In the Bhagavata-Purana he thus speaks of himself: "In a former age, O Saint, I was born as the son of a certain serving woman, in the service of maintainers of the Veda (Brahmans), and I was engaged in boyhood in attendance upon some wise Yogis, who desired to remain together during the rainy season. These Yogis, even if regarding everything equally, were compassionate to me a child, who had passed beyond all changeableness, who was docile, who had never held a plaything, who was willing, attentive in service, and of little speech. There, day by day, I heard heart-ravishing episodes of Krishna. And hearing these word by word, intense love arose in me for Him-Whose-Glory-is-Loving." With this kindling fire of devotion, there also came in the child heart an overwhelming spirit of renunciation. So, it is told, when the Yogis took up once more their wandering life, blessing him as they left with the promise that he too would one day be a great Yogi, the boy also bound up his loins with a bit of cloth, as they had done, and fearlessly set out alone to search for Truth. Not long after that, as he was seated one day by a temple tank absorbed in inner contemplation, the vision of God rose within him and a thrill of ecstasy shot through his youthful frame. He lived to be an old man, but never again did the Vision come; yet always he continued with the same faith and fervor to pray and meditate and seek. At last with his longing unfulfilled he passed away. In his next incarnation, however, he was born as Narada, the most blessed of *Bhaktas* or devotees, to whom

was granted the power to penetrate into the innermost sanctuary of the Lord and daily behold the Divine Vision.

REPORTS

The month of July was one of gratifying activity at the Vedanta Centre of Boston. Between 30 and 40 people assisted at every meeting of the Tuesday Evening Class, and the Sunday Services were also well attended, especially during the first fortnight. The Swami conducted the Services on the 4th and the 11th, choosing as the subjects for his lectures "Faith and Self-Reliance" and "Law of Karma." In the course of the second he said: "In our heart of hearts we know that there is a life more vital than this one. Yet we grow impatient and begin to feel that this little life is all in all, and that unless we enjoy everything we wish to enjoy here and now our opportunity will be lost. So we rush on and make mistakes which cause suffering to ourselves and others. But suffering is not always a curse. It sometimes proves a great purifier and accomplishes what nothing else can. Often we do not unfold our possibilities until we are confronted by misery and pain. So those who understand the law never give way to depression or show a rebellious spirit; they accept things as they are and make an effort to work out their mission. . . . An ignorant person thinks the forces of nature miraculous; but a wise man knows that there is no such thing as a miracle. The law is uniform everywhere; and as we learn to understand the law, we know how to handle the forces which are surging within us. The same force which makes for our advancement can also bring destruction. We cannot think a thought which does not produce something; each thought is like a seed sown and later we shall reap the result. At every moment we have the power to sow good seeds or evil, and these determine whether we enjoy or suffer. Suffer-

ing and enjoyment, however, are not the goal of existence. What we want above all else is wisdom; what we want is freedom, absolute liberty in our thoughts and actions. This means the rooting out of all ignorance, for ignorance is the only bondage. That person alone is free who has true wisdom. Place him where you will and you will find that nothing can disturb him; his march is always onward, because he has removed the seeds of evil from his mind.

"The Law of Karma explains the outer life by the inner. If we can understand the laws and forces which govern our destiny from within, it will be easier for us to control all that which concerns our outer life. But although it declares that what we are today is the result of our past, it is not relentless, for it tells us that if we desire to make our life in the future more fruitful, we have only to work with earnestness and God will help us and give us all the inspiration we need. One thing only we must have,—a sincere yearning to do the right thing. Each one must have a spiritual ideal and must bring that ideal into all he does. It is not the kind of work we do; it is the attitude we bear towards our work which counts. Work is neither inferior nor superior. To the man of wisdom it matters not what his work is; he does it with love and understanding, and therefore he brings blessing to himself and others."

The two Sunday Services and the Tuesday Evening Class will continue as usual through August. The subjects for the Sunday Morning Lectures will be: "Reincarnation and Immortality," "Eastern and Western Religious Ideals," "Power of Breath," "True Worship," "What is Unselfishness." All the meetings will be conducted by Sister Devamata.

* * *

Swami Paramananda started on his journey through the West on July 20th. After a day at Niagara, he stopped at

Detroit and gave an informal talk to a group of friends there, promising to return and deliver some lectures in the autumn. At Minneapolis, his next stop, he was induced to remain three days, during which he received a large number of visitors and gave two lectures,—on "India's Message to the World" and "Evolution and Reincarnation." About 100 people assisted at the first, but at the second the audience more than doubled and chairs had to be placed in the dressing-room for those who could not find seats in the hall. Great interest was manifested in the teaching and every effort was made to persuade the Swami to prolong his stay, in order that those who had not learned of his presence in Minneapolis until after the first lecture might have another opportunity to hear him speak. As that was not possible, he was urgently requested to come again on his way home and give some further lectures. The Swami was most hospitably entertained throughout his stay, receiving every possible courtesy and attention. After a visit to the Yellowstone Park and a short sojourn in Seattle, he hopes to reach San Francisco during the first week of August.

* * *

The Dacca Branch of the Ramakrishna Mission in East Bengal has just issued a report of energetic Relief Work carried on at the great festival at Langalbanda. The members of the Mission were able to gather together 100 workers, who were organized into small bands, each with a physician. These were distributed over the grounds and at the bathing ghats. A small hospital was established, but proving insufficient, the offer of the use of a ward in a local hospital was accepted. Large numbers received medical aid; children, lost in the crowd, were restored to their parents, and many women and children were rescued from drowning. Altogether the earnest efforts of the hundred workers did much to relieve the suffering of the vast multitude of pilgrims assembled.

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The Message of the East

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"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. IV. SEPTEMBER, 1915 No. 9

Man must live in such a way that he will gain blessing for himself and others. He must direct his own life with understanding and then try to give his share to the world. The whole creation is connected with the Creator. All things rise from Him, so the manifold differences we find in the world are not differences in kind but only in degree. The Truth expressed in Christ is not different from the Truth expressed in an ordinary mortal. In the ordinary man it is only more clouded, so clouded, indeed, that it seems almost lost; but if we can bring it to the surface, we shall find it to be the same Truth. Every human being is a part of creation and until he can give his share, he cannot be free. The thought that we are separate entities and must each one get his share out of the universe: it is that which binds us. The moment, however, that we realize our oneness with God, that we are an inseparable part of Him, then we no longer demand anything and we are truly able to work for our fellow-beings.

Man must first find out what he is, what power he has. It is lack of understanding which leads people to do wrong; but when their real nature unfolds, they do the right action spontaneously; so knowledge of Truth alone can save anyone. He who wishes to gain this knowledge, either for his own sake or for the sake of others, must be steadfast and persevering, for then only can he lift the veil and see the

light. He must be guided by his higher nature and never carried away by his senses. The self-subjugated man alone moves and works freely. Nothing troubles him and he causes trouble to no one. He walks through the world calm, unmoved, majestic.

One who is thus master of himself never feels the burden of life, for as he realizes his true majesty and power, he discovers how little he needs for his happiness. All his longings and desires drop away and he attains a state of peace or balance. Sorrow, anxiety, disappointment never take hold of him because his mind is fully satisfied; it does not turn to outside conditions for its satisfaction. Only when everything is pleasant and cheerful are ordinary mortals happy, not otherwise; but for him who has gained true peace and tranquillity, all grief is over. It is not that he does not feel, he feels more, but the heaviness of sorrow is gone. That which he feels as he looks upon the suffering of the world can best be described by the word "compassion" — that compassion which Buddha and Christ felt.

Through tranquillity and understanding the mind becomes established in Truth. A man who attains this state has a clear vision of everything. He is not dependent on circumstances; he has his own light and he carries it with him wherever he goes. We cannot always carry our external possessions with us, but that which is possessed by our soul, that is ours forever. Even death cannot take it from us.

—Extract from Class Talk by Swami Paramananda.

He whose heart is steadfastly engaged in Yoga (spiritual practice), looks everywhere with the eyes of equality, seeing the (Divine) Self in all beings and all beings in the Self. He who sees Me in all and all in Me, from him I vanish not, nor does he vanish from Me. *—Bhagavad-Gita.*

THE FINITE AND THE INFINITE IN MAN

Lecture by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

The natural condition of all living beings is the condition of calmness. When anyone loses his natural condition, he at once becomes restless; for restfulness, calmness and peace, all these are the necessary accompaniments of the natural condition. If then in our natural state calmness must be realized, let us analyze and see what calmness is. Calmness and sameness are synonymous. Calmness means when there is no change. If you change from one condition to another and in rapid succession, that is what we know as restlessness. But when you remain in the same condition without any change whatever, that is the state of perfect calmness. Hence calmness and sameness must be one. Now this *same* condition is the monistic condition. If it changes in the smallest degree, then there are two; and again if the least change comes, there will be three, four, five and so on. The more changes occur, the more the numerals will come up and the more restless will the man become. If then absolute peace means absolute sameness, that sameness implies unity in our whole nature.

When one goes away and another comes in, that is what makes change. If we substitute birth and death for the word change, we find the same thing; for all change means the birth of one condition and the death of another. Therefore where there is change, there must be birth and death. By the absolutely peaceful, calm condition, however, we mean that condition which is unchanging, that is, birthless, deathless, eternal; and since calmness is our natural condition, then in the natural condition we are eternal and in the unnatural condition we are non-eternal. The moment that we step out of our natural condition we grow uneasy, restless, and all sorts of false thoughts take possession of our minds. We begin to

fear disease, to fear death, to be anxious about our circumstances in life.

Why do we hate death so much? Because it is an unnatural condition for us to die. But if it is true that our natural condition is eternal, then we have no need to fear death. What is this phenomenon of death? Just a moment ago a man was carried by on a bier. He was lying there motionless; those hands will not work any more; those legs will not walk any more; those eyes that only a few hours before were seeing, are now blind. What strange phenomenon is this? Death means going out of one house to go to a better house, leaving an uninhabitable dwelling to find a habitable one. As Bhagavan Sri Krishna says: "As you throw away an old suit of clothes and take a new and better one, so the soul throws away an old, worn-out body to take a new and better one." Death is just this and nothing more. It is death only to the body. The soul never dies.

Now another question comes up: If the soul is thus eternal by nature, will it be limited in extension? This is a very important point, for even if it is unlimited by time, may it not be limited by space? We have been reading of atoms in our books on chemistry. (The term "atom" is used throughout this lecture in the sense of the ultimate particle of matter.) From these we have learned that an atom is a thing which is beginningless and endless; so we know that a thing which is infinitesimally small in magnitude may be eternal. Is the soul like that? No; it is not possible that that which is unlimited by time should be limited by space. That which is eternal must be infinite. That which exists throughout eternity cannot be limited by space, for that which is limited must have to undergo change. Something which is limited is not all-powerful and therefore must be subject to one who is all-powerful. It must then be governed by that all-powerful

being and be made to change according to his will. But that which is eternal, cannot change, since change means death. So if you are eternal, you must also be infinite and all-powerful in order to keep your sameness. A millionaire may have enormous wealth, but if there is one richer than he, he cannot be sure of keeping what he has; if, therefore, he wants to keep up the sameness of his wealth, he must be infinitely rich. Then his fortune can never be lost or diminished; for whatever you deduct from infinity, infinity will remain; and whatever you may add to infinity, infinity will still be the same. Therefore if you are to exist throughout eternity, you cannot be limited in extension; if you are eternal you must be infinite. Bhagavan Sri Krishna says: "That which is eternal must pervade all space."

I will give you another example. There is the hypothesis at present that the atom is the smallest thing we know; that it is the final particle, like the geometrical point, which according to its definition has no part and no magnitude. If it has any part, it is divisible and out of the one we can make two, out of two, four and so on. But an atom, we are told, is indivisible, the last and smallest manifestation of matter. This, however, is merely an hypothesis. If it has no part, no magnitude, it has no existence. Out of no magnitude how can all these magnitudes great and small, which we find in the universe, come into existence? How out of no parts can parts come into being? As an hypothesis this may be very good, but it is not verified in fact. An atom must have magnitude, however minute, in order that these big magnitudes may come out of it; and out of it have come the earth, the solar system, the whole universe. But if it has magnitude, then I can take the knife of my mind and divide it into two, and that again into four; and I can go on thus dividing it throughout eternity and still there will remain something to

cut. If there is always something left, it is plain that one cannot destroy matter and yet something is destroyed.

In the atom, therefore, we find two things,—one destructible, the other indestructible. What is the destructible side? The form side. By form we mean that which is large or small, or which being small may become smaller, or being big may become bigger; that is, something which changes. But although the form is constantly changing, existence is there always and this is the indestructible side. The changeful or destructible side is the form side (*asat*), and the deathless or indestructible side is the existence side (*sat*). The form side is always necessarily formful; but the existence side, is it too formful? If it is also formful, it must be destructible and changeable, for forms can always be made larger or smaller, but since it baffles every attempt to destroy it, it must be formless.

Then the question arises: How can anything exist that has not a form, since everything we see has a form? This table is square, with four legs, of a certain height and dimension. That bench again has another form and size, and so with everything we see. Can there be then a formless existence? I have just pointed out to you that form can never be made formless. But if this formless existence is eternally formless, what kind of existence can that be? What is formless existence? Formless existence is an infinite existence. The definition of form is that which is bounded on all sides by lines. Formful existence means limited existence. Formless existence means limitless existence. The finite is always surrounded by something bigger and that again by something still bigger until we reach that, than which there is nothing larger. And what is that? Infinity. So we shall have to go to that infinite something before we can stop. Existence and finiteness are inseparably connected according to our or-

dinary senses. We only know existence that is finite. But it is not possible for the finite to exist if it has not an infinite existence as a background. For instance, we are in this room, this room is in the Theological High School, this Theological High School is in Madras, Madras is in India, India is in Asia, Asia is on the earth, the earth is in the solar system, the solar system is in the universe and the universe, where is that? The universe is in God and God is infinite. Thus the background of our existence here is infinity and only because infinity is there, is it possible for this finite to exist. Hence formless existence is infinite existence. But infinity can never be divided. We cannot cut it with a knife. And because it is indivisible, it is always one and the same.

Every material particle is both formful and formless. Because it is formful, it admits of all change. Because it is formless, it admits of no change. It is evident then that the material particle that goes by the name of atom is not infinitesimally small. It is in reality infinite. But where does that infinite reside? What I see is the formful, so it is not there. Then does it exist in space? Space is limited. The idea of space is based on the idea of here and there; that is, to get the idea of space I must be here and the other must be there and that which lies between is space. If, moreover, space comes into existence after the previous existence of two entities, then it is a third existence and it must be limited, for each of these entities limits the other. Hence space cannot be limitless, it must be limited. Formless existence, therefore, cannot be in space. But space exists outside me, so formless existence cannot exist outside me.

Time again is based on the idea of before and after. We can only know time by a succession of thoughts in the mind; by something that has come before and something that has followed after. Whenever our thought becomes perfectly

fixed on one object, we lose account of time. Therefore time is formful. But we are considering formless existence. So we see that it must be beyond time as well as space, and hence beyond creation, for creation rests on time and space. Now all these are outside me, so formless or infinite existence must be inside me. What is inside me? Myself. I alone am there and there is none to limit me. Time is inside the mind. space is inside the body. Without body no space is possible, and without mind no time is possible; for mind is the basis of time and body is the basis of space. But I am beyond both mind and body. This formless existence also, because it is beyond time and space, must be beyond mind and body and therefore beyond the universe.

This formless existence which I have found out in the atom, because it cannot be localized in time, because it cannot be localized in space, because it cannot be localized in the universe, must be localized in me, in my consciousness. Therefore in me must be found that infinite eternal existence. I am indestructible by nature. If I try to destroy myself, there must be that part of me which destroys still remaining; and if I destroy that, still will there be that part, for the destroyer can never be destroyed. I am therefore limitless by my nature, so I must be infinite; and as there cannot be two infinites, I must be one with that infinite in the atom. And as infinity cannot be unconscious, I must be infinitely conscious. It is because we are now only finitely conscious that we do not know all about a thing. We see this table. We are conscious of its size and shape, but we do not know what may be inside it. But if we are infinitely conscious, we must know all about it. Hence if I am infinitely conscious, I must be all-knowing; and if I am all-knowing, I must be all-powerful, since weakness is based on ignorance. The moment we extricate ourselves from this network of formful existence, that very mo-

ment we realize that we are all-knowing, all-powerful, eternal and infinite.

You may ask: How is it possible for me to forego my blissful, all-knowing, all-powerful, eternal, infinite nature and identify myself with this finite being, who is born and who dies, who is full of fears and anxieties? I have already given the answer. Because you have been thinking unnaturally about yourself. It is because for ages and ages you have been identifying yourself with the body that you have been thinking so poorly of yourself. There is a Spanish proverb: "He who lives with dogs will begin to howl." According to your association will you grow up to manhood. Because of bad habit you have been holding all these false thoughts about yourself. The struggle against bad habit, against these false ideas, is known as practical religion. It cannot be in any way theoretical. A man may say, "I am eternal, perfect, infinite," but if he has not realized it, his words will mean nothing. When you say, "I am all-knowing" and know it, then you become it.

Practical religion is that which enables you to wage an incessant war against your unnatural way of thinking. This idea that you are Mr. So-and-So, that you are short or tall, dark or fair, happy or miserable is all false. You are nameless and formless, birthless and deathless, eternally blissful and free from all miseries. You have made a great jump out of your natural condition into an unnatural condition and that is why you are so confused. You have so absolutely forgotten your real nature and so identified yourself with your apparent nature that you are thinking yourself just the opposite of what you really are. And the only way to remedy this is by renunciation of your false nature, by giving up all these false ideas. "This landed property," you must think, "does not belong to me. This body even is not mine. I am beyond

body and mind, beyond time and space, beyond birth and death, all-perfect, all-full, all-good. No anxiety can ever come to me, no misery can ever come to me, no disease or death can ever touch me. I am there where no fear has access, where no pain has access, where no anxiety can enter. I am in that place where I am infinitely happy, infinitely secure, infinitely perfect. No name can be given to me. I am not a man, not a god, not a Brahmin, not rich or poor. Nothing can qualify me. I am without limitation and quality."

This is what is called realization, salvation, onlyness. Sooner or later you must realize your infinite nature. If you realize it in this life, then you will escape the bondage of finite existence. If you do not realize it in this life, then innumerable times you will have to be born. Weakness will not do. Truth cannot be attained by a weak man. Throw away all these false notions,—that you are tall or short, fair or dark, man or woman. When you sleep, do you remember that you are large or small, a man or a woman? No, at that time you are calm, peaceful, self-existent. That which you realize involuntarily, learn to realize it voluntarily.

You must leap over this ocean of *Samsara* or ignorance. Otherwise you are not worthy to be called a man. The more you analyze yourself, the more you will realize your infinite nature. Then these little ambitions of yours, these little troubles of yours will seem too small for you. This little life will no longer be able to hold you. These little questions about money, name and fame will seem too trivial for you. You must belittle everything, then you will not be satisfied with your finite condition. You will say: "All these little things are too insignificant for me who am infinite!" Thus belittle your pride of knowledge, your social power, your wealth. Think: "These are not intended for me. They are intended for the foolish and ignorant. They are intended for

limited beings, but I am limitless; and I must go beyond this life to satisfy my infinite hunger."

If, on the contrary, you remain satisfied with this, what is waiting for you? Innumerable deaths. You have seen a man die and such pain will be yours again and again, if you do not realize your infinite nature. The key to unlock the door of infinity is in your hand; but you are like the man who goes about searching for his necklace until some one comes and tells him that it is around his neck. In the same way someone must point out to you that your necklace is there; that what you are searching for, you have got already; and this someone is your *Guru* (spiritual teacher). He is there to remind you that you cannot be born, you cannot die, that you are eternal and infinite.

The key to unlock the glory of your own self is with you. Use it. Be not led away by the senses. You have drowned your wisdom in the quagmire of sensuality and selfishness, therefore you are miserable. Beware of sensuality. The senses are in your way. The wayward mind, this body, both stand in your way. They have deceived you. It is because you believe that you are a slave, that is why you yield to them. The cause of this delusion is in the senses. Do not let your senses rule you. Do not let the mind rule over you. The army should not be allowed to lead the commander-in-chief. If it does, then the battle is sure to be lost; the commander-in-chief alone must lead. Be the commander of your senses. Be the commander of your mind. Make them obey you absolutely. Be their master. Unlock the shrine of infinite bliss and enjoy the treasure hidden within.

Patience and strength are what we need; an earnest use of what we have now; and all the time an earnest discontent until we come to what we ought to be.—*Phillips Brooks.*

PLEADINGS

By Hannah P. Kimball.

The sunrise pleads;
Importuning with pale, ecstatic glow,
That flames to rifts of eager rose below;
The sunrise pleads.

The sunset pleads;
Pulsating with a crimson, suppliant cry,
That throbs, prophetic, through the flaming sky;
The sunset pleads.

The heavens plead.
Ah, could our lives yield what the heavens implore,
Fulfilled of Light, we should be given o'er
To Life indeed!

SELF-CULTURE AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

Civilization does not consist merely in magnificent buildings and broad roads, in scientific discoveries and inventions, in art or letters. The highest civilization is attained by that man only who has conquered self, who has realized the dominance of spirit over matter and has come to know the God within him. It is the reflection of the Divinity in man in its true essence. To harmonize the soul and the senses, to imbibe calmness and to be equally sweet in pleasure and pain, these are the signs of true culture. What use is there of a man gaining the whole world and losing his own soul? We have to civilize ourselves first, freeing the soul from the trammel of births and deaths, then alone can we accomplish the good of others. To be good is to do good; and no man can ever do good without being good himself.

Man and society act and react on each other. The great man shapes the institutions, which in their turn determine the

general development of the individuals in society, but it is plain that there can be no social progress without individual progress. The two important elements in human advancement are the growth of man individually and the growth of society as a whole. The two growths have to move on so harmoniously as to make the one serve the other, at the same time giving free scope for the independent action of each. Nothing in creation is wholly made for itself, nor yet wholly for others. The success of individuals in the selfish struggle for existence largely contributes to the general weal; and even the self-love which furnishes the incentive to individual development is often seen to operate to produce public good. In Vedanta, Prof. Max Muller declares, "this feeling of a common interest, nay, of the oneness or solidarity of the human race, was most natural. Their whole philosophy was built on the conviction that every human being has his true being in *Brahman* (the Absolute). We say we should love our neighbor as ourselves. The Vedantist says we should love our neighbor as ourself, that is, we should love them not for what is phenomenal in them, for their goodness, or beauty, or strength, or kindness, but for their Soul, for the divine self in all of them."

If an individual in any society is emancipated, the whole society is thereby raised. Self-development therefore becomes the primary duty of every member of the social body; and out of it will grow, as its flower and fruit, all true philanthropy or benevolence. "But self-culture is fundamental," an American student of ethics writes, "and the unconscious and indirect philanthropy of faithfulness to ourselves is often the best and farthest-reaching. Such self-culture fits us for service to others; when the time comes, the man is ready. Moreover, we must first live the true life ourselves, if we would help others to live it too; we must be ourselves before we can

help others to be." A little thought makes plain to us that all evolution is wholly a question of individual unfoldment. A new species can come into existence only through the gradual modification of a number of separate individuals moving along similar lines. When the human state is reached and the circle of independent action grows wider, the power of the individual asserts itself more and more, until upon each human being rests the responsibility of hastening or retarding the onward march.

Individual regeneration must precede social regeneration. It was because the great Vedic Seers clearly understood this basic principle of sociology that they called so insistently on every human soul to realize its own perfection. This was also the reason why, although recognizing many centuries before the Christian era the fact of evolution, they differ so widely from modern western scientists with regard to the process. Thus, while the western evolutionist proceeds from the study of the body to the consideration of the soul, the great Indo-Aryan sages sought first to prove the reality of the soul and from it, and as connected with it, to turn to the study of matter. This was, they claimed, the only logical course; since all evolution, as they conceived it after tireless observation of nature, is only a more and more complete manifestation of the Supreme Intelligence in association with matter; while perfection is the fullest and freest expression of this Intelligence in the *Atman* or Soul of man. The *Atman* itself is like the light of a lamp shining now dimly and now brightly, partaking of the qualities of the medium through which it shines. When this medium becomes colorless—that is, when all man's lower nature is purged and purified—then the light may be seen as it is.

The goal towards which Vedanta leads man in the journey of evolution is the state of perfect spiritual purity and free-

dom. That which makes us separate warring entities is the ego, the savage within us. "But this savage must be disciplined and civilized to produce a man, and the man must be patiently cultivated to produce a wise man, and the wise man must be tested and tried if he is to become righteous. And the righteous man must have substituted the will of God for his own individual will if he is to become a saint. And the new man, this regenerated being, is the spiritual man, the heavenly man, of whom the Vedas speak." Let the earth be peopled with myriads of such spiritually-illumined beings and a social millenium would be reached. Yet, if only ten righteous men would have sufficed to save Sodom and Gomorrah, it is evident that even a small number of awakened souls can accomplish an incalculable amount in lifting the general level of any community.

The task, however, need not be left to the few who have attained the journey's end. Every earnest effort towards self-mastery and self-culture on the part of even the humblest may in its cumulative effect produce results greater than we can measure. How little did that obscure Buddhist monk realize, when he set out on his spiritual life, that he would one day kindle a new light in all Asia; yet by converting the King Asoka through his steadfastness and calm indifference to death, he became the means of sending out one of the mightiest civilizing impulses the world has ever known. Every soul has a cosmic mission and ultimate happiness cannot be attained until that has been fulfilled.

The moral order is truly a spiritual order, and in it only our life has reality. All life is its life, and the manifestation of this life is the infinite development of humanity. Life does not exist as a completed part, but eternally is to be. The individual finite Ego, in acceptance of his position as a mem-

ber in this supersensible order, realizes his infinite vocation, tends more and more to lose his apparent individuality and approaches ever more nearly to the idea of infinitude which is the characteristic mark of self-consciousness. In this intelligible moral order the abstract form of self-consciousness here receives its concrete development and completion.

—*Fichte.*

VILWAMANGAL THE SAINT

Drama by Girish Chunder Ghosh.

Rendered from The Bengalee specially for the "Message of the East."

(Continued from July number.)

Act IV.

(Scene I: Chintamani's house. The false ascetic and Thaki try to break open the strong chest and steal the jewels and money there. The noise attracts the police, who come and arrest them.)

Scene II.

A Roadway. Chintamani and Pagalini enter.

Chintamani.—Mother, please stop for a while. I cannot go further. Let us sit here a moment.

Pagalini.—Sit down, my child, sit down; but I cannot sit down, for He is waiting for me on the road. What will He say if I am late? You go to your Lord and I will go to my Lord. He is one without a second, yet to me He seems mine, and to you He seems yours. I must go. No; I will sit down a moment, as you ask.

Chintamani (*to herself*).—Whom have I taken as a companion? Whatever she may be, outwardly she appears mad. If I have been able to give up everything, why not also give up her companionship? Vilwamangal is wandering all alone. I shall no longer beg Pagalini to stay with me. Let come what will. I have heard that God is with everyone; I shall

see what my fate may be. But my heart weeps to say farewell to Pagalini.

Pagalini.—See how yonder bird is flying all alone and singing.

Chintamani.—O Mother, I understand all this, yet still my heart rebels and will not understand. You have renounced everything, Mother, and are full of yearning for God alone; but in me desire still rises. (*Musing to herself*) I shall implore forgiveness at Vilwamangal's feet. If he does not forgive me, then God will not grant me shelter. Yet I know he is a compassionate saint. But I have offended him hundreds of times, how shall I reach the feet of the Lord? I shall go to him. I shall take the dust of his feet. I shall ask for forgiveness with folded hands. Then alone will all my impurity vanish and I shall obtain the Lord's grace. (*To Pagalini*) I shall take your advice, Mother, and wander about alone in this world. In my heart is the hope that some day I may sing like that bird. Go, dear Mother, go where the Lord calls you. If the thought of me rises in your mind, then come to me. You are my mother; do not forget your child. Go where the Lord calls you, Mother.

Pagalini.—I go now, my daughter, but I shall come again.

(*She goes out.*)

Chintamani (*alone*).—Weep, eyes! You have never wept before for others. You did not weep even when my treasure went away in anger. Fill my heart full with tears. By those tears will it be made clean and its burning fever will be soothed. Pour out a flood, O eyes, else will my impurities not be washed away. Rise, O waters, bursting from this rock (of my heart), pour out your flood upon this cremation ground within. The fire of the funeral pyre is burning there. Selfish thoughts are always strong. O selfish mind, what hast thou gained for thyself? To what end hast thou ruined me? Why

hast thou made me like a stone? O Lord, Saviour of the wretched, All-Compassionate One, protect me. I die in my heart's delirium. Bestow mercy on this helpless woman.

(*Beggar enters.*)

Beggar.—Why are you sitting alone here weeping? Do you want to go back home?

Chintamani.—Who are you?

Beggar.—I am the one to whom Pagalini gave the keys. If you want to go home, I can take you. Why are you looking at me in that vacant way? You haven't anything with you that I would steal from you.

Chintamani.—I shall not return home again.

Beggar.—Then where will you go?

Chintamani.—Wherever these two eyes lead me.

Beggar.—Do you know why I am asking you this? Listen. I have been thinking of going to Vrindavana. If you will go too, we can go together. Then I can easily live on you.

Chintamani.—But you must know that I have nothing with me. I shall have to beg for my bread.

Beggar.—It's true that you haven't anything, yet I shall live on you just the same.

Chintamani.—Do you imagine that I shall get money from home? No, not so. Those who wanted to poison me for the sake of money, that money I have left for them. They do not yet understand that what I left them is the real poison. Did you not see me throw away my keys?

Beggar.—Of course I did. I was standing right there. But wait! Let me open the bundle. (*He opens his bundle.*) Whose jewels are these?

Chintamani.—Whose are they?

Beggar.—Look! Look carefully. Don't you recognize them? They are yours; those you gave to Pagalini.

Chintamani.—Where did you get them?

Beggar.—I was planning to steal them, but I didn't have to. Pagalini gave them to me.

Chintamani.—Then they are yours. Why do you say they are mine?

Beggar.—Don't you understand? If I am caught with these jewels, I'll be sent to jail. Deceiving Pagalini or a little child is about the same.

Chintamani.—No, no; those jewels are yours.

Beggar.—Very well. They're mine because Pagalini gave them to me; now I give them to you, so they're yours.

Chintamani.—No, my good man, I have no need for jewels.

Beggar.—But why not take them? Then I'll take them back.

Chintamani.—Bah! Is he crazy?

Beggar.—You think I am an idiot and you are clever! But let me tell you. Listen! You see I have a little habit of taking things. I have been hoping for some time that this disease would leave me; but when I can't steal, I don't sleep at night. For that reason do you know what I do? I pretend that a certain tree is a man and that I am following him. Whenever a branch moves, I imagine he's awake; but at midnight when everything is still, I pretend he's sleeping, then I snatch my bundle and run and run as if the police were after me. At last, crawling under a bush, I put my head on my bundle and go fast asleep. If I give the jewels to you, I shall steal them one by one and feed myself by selling them. When all are gone, I'll fill the bundle with pebbles and bricks and carry it with me. Also let me give you a little advice for your own sake. You won't be able to bear so much. You've never been used to such hardship and you can't endure so much all at once. When you've become as strong as Paga-

lini, then you can do as you please.

Chintamani.—Alas! Alas! Past impressions! How long before their delirium will cease? As I sit under the trees, visions of my soft bed rise before my mind; my tongue craves for palatable food; my body recoils from ragged clothes and longs for ornaments, only to become once more an image of deceit. How long will these past impressions linger?

Beggar.—What are you bothering about? Come; as mother and son let us wander.

Chintamani.—Where shall we go?

Beggar.—Wherever you've a mind to.

Chintamani.—Come then.

(*They go out together.*)

Scene III.

In the Merchant's house. Merchant and Ahalya, his wife.

Merchant.—Why art thou smiling?

Ahalya.—Because I see a grey hair on thy head. Thou art getting old. That's why I was smiling.

Merchant.—Yes, I was just thinking that I am growing old; and yet what am I still doing?

Ahalya.—Oh ho! That's good. Thou wilt not be able to marry again.

Merchant.—That's true. Why shall I continue to spend my days here. Come, let us go away.

Ahalya.—Very well. Why not?

Merchant.—Where dost thou think it best to go?

Ahalya.—How do I know? It's for thee to say.

Merchant.—Thou dost understand.

Ahalya.—If I understood, why should I ask Thee?

Merchant.—Dost thou realize that the days are passing?

Ahalya.—What can I know? Please tell me.

Merchant.—Listen! That white hair on my head tells me: "Death is coming to seize thee." That hair says: "Thou

art no longer a boy. Soon thou wilt have to go. Begin to earn for thy journey. Nothing of all this will accompany thee. The days are passing, spent in pleasure. Thou hast not gained the knowledge of God in this body." First as a child I played with dust, in youth with gold and enjoyment. The white hair warns me: "That game is over. What new game wilt thou play now? All games will soon be ended for thee. Thou camest alone and alone thou must go."

Ahalya.—Lord of my life, that thought never rises in my mind. It is true that thou didst come into this world before me, but I followed thee. My heart is tied to thine and wherever thou goest, I shall follow like a shadow.

Merchant.—Let us go to Vrindavana.

Ahalya.—Very well. Let us go.

Merchant.—Make ready for the journey.

(*Rakhal, a shepherd boy, enters.*)

Rakhal.—Hello! Hello! Are you going to Vrindavana?

Ahalya (*aside to her husband*).—Ah! Look what a beautiful boy that is! (*To Rakhal*) Whose child are you, my son?

Rakhal.—Can't you see? I am a shepherd boy.

Merchant.—How did you come here?

Rakhal.—I often come this way.

Ahalya.—Why have you come?

Rakhal.—I have told you already. I came to ask if you were going to Vrindavana.

Merchant.—Why are you asking if we are going to Vrindavana?

Rakhal.—I have a reason for it. Why don't you answer?

Ahalya.—Yes, we'll go. Will you come too?

Rakhal (*nodding assent*).—Hm'm.

Ahalya (*to her husband*).—Ah! I would just like to hold that child against my heart. (*To Rakhal*) Won't your mother say anything?

Rakhal.—I have no mother—no mother, no father.

Ahalya.—Where do you live?

Rakhal.—Oh, I tend the shepherd's cows over there and that's where I live.

Ahalya.—Do you know how to tend cows?

Rakhal (*nodding*).—Hm'm.

Ahalya.—Really you have no one belonging to you?

Rakhal (*to Ahalya*).—You are my mother. (*To the merchant*) You are my father.

Ahalya.—Call me mother again.

Rakhal.—Mother, mother, mother.

Merchant.—He is an orphan.

Rakhal.—Yes. I'm an orphan.

Merchant.—We are starting for Vrindavana today.

Rakhal.—Oh ho! That's fine! That's fine!

Merchant.—Why? Why are you so anxious to go to Vrindavana?

Rakhal.—Oh! I am in great trouble.

Merchant.—What can be your trouble?

Rakhal.—Oh, I can't tend my cows because of him. I can't play, I can't go to Vrindavana, all because of him. Now you can take him to Vrindavana with you. Then I can go too.

Merchant.—Why?

Rakhal.—You know he can't see at all and when he begins to call "Lord, Lord," and to beat his breast, my heart grows very uneasy. I keep by his side, otherwise he may fall on a thorny bush or he may starve. If I do not give him food, he will not get anything to eat; for who will give him food? Besides he doesn't want to eat at all, and I have a hard time feeding him.

Merchant (*aside to Ahalya*).—I believe it is that great soul.

Ahalya.—I also think so.

Merchant.—Where is he living?

Rakhal.—Oh, he goes wherever there is a lonely wooded place.

Merchant.—What does he do?

Rakhal.—"Lord, Lord," that's all he does, as if the Lord were his old family servant.

Merchant (*to Ahalya, with a smile*).—Foolish child. (*To Rakhal*) What else does he do?

Rakhal.—Sometimes he rubs his face on the earth, sometimes he falls on the ground, sometimes he tears his hair. Will you take him with you?

Merchant.—Will he go?

Rakhal.—I will persuade him to go. Let him go to Vrindavana. He is all the time calling "Krishna, Krishna!" He will find Him there.

Merchant.—How do you know that?

Rakhal.—Go to Vrindavana and not find Krishna?

Merchant.—Is it true that merely by going to Vrindavana one finds Krishna?

Rakhal.—Of course he will find Him. You're very wise!

Ahalya.—Will you find Krishna?

Rakhal.—Why should I find Him? Am I calling "Krishna, Krishna," all the time? I am always thinking "Blind man, blind man," so I'll get him. One gets what one wants.

Merchant.—My child, as I listen to your words, hope is rising in my heart. Is it true that whatever one wants in Vrindavana, one gets that?

Rakhal.—Go and find out for yourself. I'll run and tell him about it. You'll hire a boat at the boat landing? I'll take him there. Do you see yonder Banyan tree on the river bank? There where the woods are very thick, and where

people never go because they are afraid of ghosts? That's where he lives. I can't stay here any longer now. The day is ending. You'd better be coming.

(*Rakhal goes out.*)

Ahalya.—Ah! What sweetness filled my heart when he called me mother!

Merchant.—The boy appears like Gopalam (the child Krishna). It is as if he came to rekindle hope in my mind. But I am wondering whether that great soul will really go with us? You remember how earnestly I begged him to stay with us here, but he would not stay. Strange that he should have been living so near us and I searched for him everywhere but did not even once see him. Who can this shepherd boy be? He goes into that terrible forest to care for him.

Ahalya.—You see, never having borne a child, now I am mother of Gopalam. People used to mock me because I had no son; now I am starting to Vrindavana with two sons.

Merchant.—I'm thinking whether he will really come with us.

Ahalya.—Of course he will come. That is not an ordinary shepherd boy. I believe he's Gopalam Himself. The holy man will surely yield to his sweet words.

Merchant.—Come! Let us hasten!

(*They both go out.*)

(To be continued.)

NOTICE

There will be no change in the meetings at the Vedanta Centre of Boston during September. The two Services on Sunday at 11 A. M. and at 5 P. M. will continue as usual, and also the Tuesday Evening Class. The subjects for Sunday morning will be: "The Practice of Religion," "Meditation and Superconsciousness," "The Problem of Good and Evil," "The Secret of Right Living."

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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Oct. 3rd	*Christianity and Vedanta.*
" *10th*	*Law of Karma and Heredity.*
" *17th*	*Self-Mastery and Super-Consciousness.*
" *24th*	*The Power of Healing.*
" *31st*	*Resistance and Non-Resistance.*
Nov. 7th	*Life after Death.*
" *14th*	*Idols and Ideals.*
" *21st*	*What is Yoga?*
" *28th*	*Spiritual Consecration.*
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" *19th*	*Buddha the Compassionate.*
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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II. OCTOBER, 1915 No. 10

TRUE RENUNCIATION

Salvation is impossible to attain unless it be through the portals of renunciation. It is he "who wants nothing," who is unmoved by the promptings of the senses and desires, in whom such promptings never rise even, it is this man who is dear unto the Lord. He alone lives not for himself. He is the friend of all; his heart is full of the divine fire of love and mercy; and he is unattracted by pleasure and unrepelled by pain. It is renunciation that prepares the mind for the seed of true spiritual knowledge by weeding it of the rank growth of selfishness and greed. It may, therefore, be said to be higher than such knowledge itself, for knowledge without renunciation is of no avail. Thus are we to understand the statement in the Bhagavad-Gita: "Better indeed is knowledge than blind practice, better than knowledge is meditation, better than meditation is the renunciation of the fruits of action, and tranquillity follows renunciation." Thus renunciation secures to us that tranquillity of mind without which meditation on the nature of *Brahman* or the Supreme is impossible; and as it is through meditation and *Abhyasa* or practice that we can reach the true knowledge we are in search of, this ultimate result, intrinsically the highest though it be, yields in importance—for purposes of practical guidance—to renunciation as the one indispensable means for the achievement of final success.

A man may have wholly renounced the world, however, and yet retain all the outer signs and activities of a temporal life; for true renunciation, or the complete eradication of self which it implies, is in no way hostile to the discharge of one's duties. We see this in the case of the great king of ancient India, Janaka of Videha, who had reached such a state of non-attachment that even when his palace and treasure-house were in flames, he could quietly continue his discourse on God, declaring: "Were my whole kingdom of Mithila reduced to ashes, I would be none the poorer"; yet he was a ruling sovereign with all the heavy burden of government on his shoulders. A life of extreme activity is not only possible but may be obligatory for the man who has in his heart no concern for worldly affairs. He will continue to perform his duties, but his actions will be marked by a lofty disinterestedness, an indifference to pleasure and pain, to success and failure, which makes it possible for him to remain serene and unaffected even in the bitterest reverses and afflictions.

The true seeker after God, who has abandoned the world, must work and act for others, nay, act even for himself, and act with promptitude and prudence, with foresight and judgment; but he must not allow his mind to become involved in the results of his actions. Those, he must never forget, belong wholly to God. The sincerity of his renunciation will be measured, not by the amount of austerity he practises, but by the extent of his detachment from his own ego; for the most rigid acts of denial and penance, if accompanied by self-consciousness, merely retard the soul's onward march. Renunciation should be clearly distinguished from that asceticism which savors of self-torture. Honest discipline is necessary, but the Vedanta distinctly denies salvation as the result of self-inflicted pain. It declares in the Gita and elsewhere that

those who perform terrible austerities, against the injunction of the Scriptures, really do violence to their spiritual nature and "torment Me (the Lord) residing in their body."

The renunciation or *Vairagyam* taught in Vedanta is less an act of giving-up than of out-growing. It comes as the spontaneous result of keeping the mind fixed on higher things. This gradually lifts the thought and ideals until all lower desires and attachments drop off of themselves, just as the petals of the blossom fall when the fruit begins to swell. The man who has seen the pearl of great price joyfully sells all that he has to buy it. But this willing sacrifice is very different from that world-weariness which is often mistaken for non-attachment. He who leaves the world out of disgust for it will surely return to it, because he is impelled merely by thwarted desire; but he who offers up his whole heart to God, caring not whether he lives in or out of the world, he alone is the true renouncer and to him only will the final revelation come.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

And behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. —*St. Matthew.*

For the beholding of the hidden things of God, shalt thou forsake sense and the things of the flesh, and all that the senses can apprehend, and that reason of her own powers can bring forth, and all things created and uncreated that reason is able to comprehend and know, and shalt take thy stand upon an utter abandonment of thyself, and as knowing none of the aforesaid things, and enter into union with Him

who is, and who is above all existence and all knowledge.

—*St. Dionysius.*

As long as Thy love has not entirely divested me of egotism, I cannot sit with Thee, according to my wishes, freed from self. I am the thorn of my own way: Release me from myself. —*Mirkhond.*

If you are unable to undergo austerities and to engage in deep contemplation, the proper course to liberate your soul from the hard fetters of *Karma* would be to keep the passions of your heart under control, to check your desires, to carry out your secular affairs with calmness, to devote yourself to the worship of God and to realize in yourself the Permanent Truth, bearing in mind the transitory nature of the objects of the universe. —*Vairagya-Sataka.*

He who, though dressed in fine apparel, exercises tranquillity, is quiet, subdued, restrained, chaste and has ceased to find fault with all other beings, he indeed is a Brahmana (God-seeker), an ascetic, a Bikshu (man of renunciation).

—*Buddha.*

Not from space must I seek my dignity, but from the ruling of my thought. I should have no more if I possessed whole worlds. By space the universe encompasses and swallows me as an atom; by thought I encompass it. All our dignity therefore consists in thought. By this must we raise ourselves, not by space or duration which we cannot fill. Then let us make it our duty to think well; for this is the starting point of morals. —*Pascal.*

Freedom from desires is, as it were, the highest prize to be taken from the best treasure (*Brahman*). For a man full of all desires, being possessed of will, imagination and belief, is a slave; but he who is devoid of desire is free.

—*Maitrayana-Brahmana-Upanishad.*

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Class-Talk by Swami Paramananda.

We must always bear in mind the purpose of all spiritual practice:—that is, to open a channel within us by which we may feel the presence of God and see what is now invisible to us. The channel is opened when we are able to drop the consciousness of the little "I" and free our mind from impurities or from its attachment to material things only. So the whole object of our practice is to make us pure and humble, that we may approach God with openness of heart. There are various methods by which this may be accomplished,—by prayer, by meditation, by work, devotion, self-sacrifice and self-control. If, however, we follow any one of these methods without remembering the purpose of it, it may produce just the result we are trying to avoid; that is, it may stimulate the ego and thus prove a drawback. No matter what we do, therefore, we must never lose sight of the fact that God is the Supreme Reality, the Highest Self; He is the only one to be depended on and not the lower self; and constantly surrendering ourselves to Him in our thought will so purify us that we shall be able to find a connection or open a channel by which we may unite ourselves with the Supreme.

This is what is meant by religious practice: To have a definite consciousness regarding the Real, regarding Spirit, not through books or through someone else, but through one's own self. Each one must be able to awaken his own inner nature. He must be able to grasp the meaning of life, to perceive the existence of God directly. That is the aim of all study and practice. A man who lives here and performs the duties of life must know the purpose of life; he must know his relation with the Unseen Doer; he must understand the Force which is constantly working within and without him. Yoga teaches this. The very word signifies man's union with

the Supreme. Until he has attained that union and feels that he is being guided by God along the right path, he cannot have any sense of security; and so long as he does not feel that he is safe, he cannot enjoy life. If, however, at every moment of his existence he is wholly devoted to the Supreme, then he can never feel separated from Him. When under all circumstances, in our waking and sleeping, we carry the thought of God and put it into all our actions, then we are living the spiritual life.

The aim of the spiritual life is not to destroy our present life, but to enrich it, to make it fuller, more effective. We must never think that we are abandoning or neglecting anything when we try to do the right thing towards our soul. On the contrary, we cannot say that we are working for the world, if we do not pay proper attention to our own soul. This awakening of soul-consciousness is the very first step that every individual being must take. And in that all the problems of life are included. When it is accomplished, then what we now regard as unseen becomes seen; what we now believe to be impossible becomes possible; for as the channel opens, there comes the flow of Reality.

At present the channel is blocked on account of our ignorance, or because perhaps we are unconsciously shutting it off. If there is a beautiful picture before you, but you are looking in the opposite direction, you do not see it. And this is what bars the vision of Reality. We are constantly looking to the external; we are absorbed in the affairs of the outer world, without ever stopping to observe what is happening within. But what happens in the outside world is nothing but the effect. If we want to control the effect, we must find the cause. If we want to control death, we must know what life is. We cannot control death by simply thinking of death; we must find life. That is what philosophy teaches. A man

who is running after the external, must withdraw his mind from it so that he can get another point of view. The life of meditation or reflection within one's own self does not mean laying aside our outer activities; it means gaining a new point of view, which is just as important—perhaps more important—than our present one, because it gives a truer grasp of life and leads to the cause of things. When we have known the inner life to a certain extent, we can adjust the outer better.

The external or physical life becomes much easier when we understand our spiritual life, for it is through our spiritual life that we exist physically. Not being conscious of that fact, we try only to nourish the physical and the method we apply in giving nourishment also is not proper; that is why we feel such impoverishment, such disappointment and helplessness in our life. We are like a man who is charmed with some special branch or flower or fruit of a tree. He waters that and bestows all his care on that, but he soon finds that it withers because he has not poured the water at the proper place,—at the root of the tree. So it is with our relationship with God. Unless we take care of that, unless we water it with our devotion, our spiritual consciousness will wither and we shall feel keenly the death of the objects on which our interest is focused; but if we care for the root of our life, then we do not have the same disappointment and suffering when we see the outer decay of things, because we know what is the Root and Source of our existence and of our happiness.

Yoga says: "By meditating on the Supreme Being of the Universe, by worshipping Him, by offering all our prayers to Him, Who is free from all grief, all impurity, all ignorance, Who stands above the conditions of the mortal world, Who is the Supreme Source of all light, wisdom and blessing; by meditating on Him, the Yogi attains to that state of conscious-

ness which is the goal of all spiritual practice,—the state of complete illumination." There is no greater help for the limited mortal who is constantly trying to run away from his limitation, than to be conscious of a Superior Power and to place himself voluntarily under the protection of that Power. In our practice, therefore, if we can have something tangible, an Ideal upon whom we can call for guidance and help, with whom we can seek shelter, whose voice we are able to hear, whose presence seems a reality to us, very soon our concentration and meditation will take a definite form and this is extremely helpful in the life of spiritual culture.

Often we try to imagine the Absolute and pray to Him, but it is not an easy thing for ordinary mortals to fix their mind steadily on the abstract. When, however, we can take some Attribute of that Absolute Infinite Being, as it is described in the Scriptures: God the Effulgent Spirit, Father and Mother of all living creatures; the Giver of all blessings; Protector, Companion, greatest of all Friends, Who never fails us, however much our human friends through their limitations may fail us, because His friendship is not dependent on material conditions; Who gives His love freely to us, whether or not we are able to give our full share to Him: when we can look upon God in this way, then we are able to form a closer relation with Him and our spiritual consciousness is more quickly awakened. This is what the Yogi or devotee does. He takes an Ideal and through that establishes true friendship with the Supreme Deity. He asks for His aid when he is in difficulty, he makes Him his constant companion and treats Him as the nearest of all friends. When a definite form like that is fixed in the mind, it becomes easier to pray and meditate. Such a definite form, however, is only possible when the mind is clear and pure and free from the control of the ego.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say that those who are born with

a certain established relationship with God are very fortunate, because they begin with something definite. In some way they have earned that blessing. They are not going hither and thither searching in an indefinite way; but they already have an Ideal to start with and therefore they find it natural to follow the spiritual path. But we can all have a definite Ideal in our mind, we can all make the spiritual life a reality to us, as real as our earthly life and earthly relations. Now we depend upon earthly support, but we can in the same way learn to find our support in God or Truth. As our spiritual nature unfolds and we grow more conscious of our relationship with the Supreme Spirit, we shall feel less and less bound by the material world; the fetters will fall off, as it were, of their own accord. All our imperfections will seem to drop away of themselves, as we come in contact with a Perfect Being. By merely disciplining our mind and body we cannot gain perfection. A man may strive for ages to root out his physical and mental imperfections, but even then he will not realize perfection. As, however, he thinks constantly of a Perfect Being, he absorbs the attributes of that Being; or he opens a channel by which he establishes a relationship with the Undying, All-Knowing, All-Loving, Effulgent Spirit and thereby he breaks the bondage of material life.

In the Bhagavad-Gita Lord Krishna tells His disciple that it is very necessary to subdue the senses and learn to control the body and mind; but He says again that although one may starve the senses and thereby deaden their feeling, one has not gained much spiritually because desires still linger in the heart; when, however, one has seen the Supreme, then all desires and limitations drop off forever. So whatever we do, whether we give discipline to the body and mind or whether we turn our whole thought in the opposite direction, we must not forget that the main object of all

our practice is to educate our inner being, to unfold our spiritual nature and to bring us face to face with the Supreme; for He is the one real aim and object of all our search.

When we meditate on Him with conviction, then our heart becomes illumined with His Light and that is what is called *Samadhi* or super-consciousness, the consciousness which includes all lesser forms of consciousness. As we go about our ordinary life, therefore, we should sometimes stop, draw ourselves within and try to get the other point of view, to see that other aspect of our life. It is this balancing of the two sides and gaining a state of equilibrium which prepares our mind for the knowledge of the Supreme. So long, however, as it is overpowered by one aspect of life,—the physical and material—we can never know our inner being and our soul will be starved even though our body is fed.

PRAYER

O Mother Divine! I throw myself upon Thy mercy. May the Lotus of Thy Feet ever keep me from whatever leadeth Thy children away from Thee! I seek not, Good Mother, the pleasures of the senses. I seek not fame. Nor do I long for those powers which enable one to perform miracles! What I pray for, O Mother, is pure love for Thee—love untainted by desires, love without alloy, love that seeketh not the things of the world, love that welleth up unbidden from the depths of the immortal soul!

Grant likewise, Mother, that Thy child, bewitched by the allurements of this deluding world, may not forget Thee—yes, forget Thee, entangled in the net of lust and greed, which Thou in Maya's form hast woven round him. O grant that he may never be charmed into loving these! Mother Divine, seest Thou not that Thy child has none

else in all the world beside Thee? Alas! I know not how to chant Thy Name! Devoid am I of deep devotion, of knowledge too that leadeth unto Thee; devoid of genuine love for Thee. Vouchsafe unto me that love, O Mother, out of Thine Infinite and Unfailing Mercy!

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

A SONG I SING TO THEE

Rendered from a Bengalee Poem Composed by Swami Vivekananda.

A song I sing. A song I sing to Thee!
Nor care I for men's comments, good or bad.
Censure or praise I hold of no account.

Servant am I, True servant of Thee, Lord.
Low at Thy feet, with Sakti, I salute!

Thou standest, steadfast, ever at my back.
Hence when I turn me round, I see Thy face,
Thy smiling face. Therefore I sing again
And yet again. Therefore I fear no fear;
For birth and death lie prostrate at my feet.

Thy servant am I through birth after birth;
Sea of mercy, inscrutable Thy ways;
So is my destiny inscrutable;
It is unknown; nor would I wish to know.
Bhakti, Mukti, Japam, Tapas, all these;
Enjoyment, worship and devotion too,—
These things, and all things similar to these,
I have expelled at Thy supreme command.
But only one desire is left in me,—
An ever-closer life with Thee!

Take me, O Lord, across to Thee;
Let no desire's dividing line prevent.

The eye looks out upon the universe,
Nor does it seek to look upon itself;
Why should it? It sees itself in others'.
Thou art mine eyes, ay! Thou and Thou alone!
For every living temple shrines Thy face.

Like to the playing of a little child
Is every attitude of mine toward Thee.
Even, at times, I dare be angered with Thee;
Even, at times, I'd wander far away;—
Yet there, in deepest gloom of darkest night;
Yet there, with speechless mouth and tearful eyes,
Thou standest fronting me, and Thy sweet face
Stoops down with loving look on face of mine.
Then, instantly, I turn me back to Thee,
And at Thy feet I fall on bended knee.
I crave no pardon at Thy gentle hands,
For Thou art never angry with Thy son.
Who else with all my foolish freaks would bear?

Thou art my Master! Thou my soul's real mate.
Many a time I see Thee,—I am Thee!
Aye! I am Thee, and Thou, my Lord, art me!
Thou art within my speech. Within my throat
Art Thou, as Vinapani, learned, wise.

On the flow of Thy current and its force
Humanity is carried as Thou wilt.
The thunder of Thy voice is borne upon the boom
Of crashing waves of over-leaping seas;

The sun and moon give utterance to Thy voice;
Thy conversation, in the gentle breeze
Makes itself heard; in truth, in very truth.
True! True! And yet, the while, these gross percepts
Give not the message of the Higher Truth
Known to the knower!

Lo! The sun, the moon,
The moving planets and the shining stars,
Spheres of abode by myriads in the skies;
The comet swift; the glimmering lightning-flash;
The firmament, expanded, infinite;—
These all, observant watchful eyes behold.

Anger, desire, greed, delusion and the rest,
Whence issues forth the waving of the play
Of this existence;—the home wherein dwells
Knowledge and non-knowledge;—whose center is
The feeling of small self, the "I"! The "I"!—
Full of the dual sense of pleasure and of pain,—
Teeming with birth and life, decay and death;—
Whose arms are "The External" and "The Internal";
All things that are, down to the ocean's depths;
Up to the sun, moon, and stars in spanless space;
The mind, the intellect, the sense of "I";
The *Deva; Yaksha;* the man and demon, all;
The quadruped; the bird; the worm; all insect life;
The atom and its compound; all that is;
Animate and inanimate; all; all;—
In that one common plane of being!

(NOTE: Bhakti, devotion. Mukti, freedom. Japam, repetition of the Lord's Name. Tapas, self-discipline or austerity. Vinapani, the goddess of learning. Deva, bright one. Yaksha, demi-god.)

CONTROL OF THE MIND

By S. Ellen Waldo.

The ancient Hindus more clearly appreciated the importance of thought than the Europeans do, even at the beginning of this twentieth century. They also went farther and taught men how to control their thoughts in such a way as to make them forces for good. Usually thoughts are so hazy, in the minds of most people, that they have but little force in the way of helping others, or even of actually injuring them. They only serve to open the mind of the person thinking them to the influence of all kinds of similar thoughts that may be floating, or rather vibrating, in the mental atmosphere. The ancient sages of India taught this theory of vibration that today is the latest conclusion of modern science. All we know is the result of different rates of vibration; not only sound, heat, light, and color, but even all the grosser forms of material existence, even the rocks and minerals, are simply different rates of vibration; and every atom and molecule in the whole universe is in motion at a rate too rapid to be seen. Thought has a higher rate of vibration than anything else; and in thought there are different rates of vibration, varying according to the quality and character of the thoughts themselves. When once we have come to perceive even dimly the great importance of right thinking and that our thoughts ought to be entirely under our control, we are more likely to take interest in learning how we may bring our minds into subjection and make them our servants, instead of letting them rule us, as now is so often the case with most of us.

Vedanta tells us of many ways of getting this control, but all of them involve patient effort. First we may have to take the help of the body in approaching it. We have in some measure to regulate our diet, eating only simple and

unstimulating food. We do not mean by this that it is necessary to fast or to practise any kind of asceticism, but just to exercise a little self-restraint in the matter of indulging the appetite. After that, we must make a practice of spending some time in quiet meditation at least twice a day. Persistent effort must be made to fix the mind on one thought and to hold it there. Every time it strays away, we must firmly bring it back and once more try to fix it. In all probability it will be a long time before we can keep the mind on one idea for a whole minute without wavering, but once the power of concentration is acquired, in even a very limited degree, a great step has been gained.

The chief object of gaining this mental control is to be able to purify the mind, to put out of it all bad thoughts; because thoughts will, sooner or later, eventuate in action. It is a mistake to suppose that any one suddenly changes his nature and breaks out into open crime, without any previous preparation for it. The particular act may be unpremeditated, but the character of the thoughts that preceded it, for perhaps a very long time, must have been of a nature to bring the mind into a condition where such action was possible. In a case, say, when a man in a moment of passion kills another, he may have had no previous intention to do such a thing, but he must have allowed his mind to gradually reach a state where a sudden blaze of anger, or jealousy, or greed, actualized itself on the external plane and murder was done before he knew it. Every thought of hatred, or ill-will, or envy, or avarice, or lust, or jealousy that we allow to remain in our minds, is a menace to our self-control in a moment of provocation. And if we go on indulging in such thoughts, the time is almost sure to come when they will take form in action. That is why Vedanta tells us that the control of the mind is all-important for one who wishes

to become really religious. The best way to get rid of objectionable thoughts is by persistently thinking opposite thoughts, by dwelling constantly on thoughts of purity and truth and love. Unselfish love is a great purifier of the mind, because it keeps one so busy thinking how he can best help others that he has no time for evil thoughts.

In order to make our thoughts helpful to our fellow beings two things are necessary. First the habit of high, pure thinking must be established; and second, there must be the ability to think clearly and persistently upon one subject. Out of these two will develop the ability to project these good thoughts at will in whatever direction we wish. Of course, to a vast majority of people who can only believe in the efficiency of action, the idea that thoughts, unaccompanied by external effort, can be of much or even of any service in the world is an absurd one. They say it is like trying to feed a hungry man by wishing that he might be fed. On the material plane it is a self-evident fact that in the main material means are necessary, but we have it on excellent authority that "Man does not live by bread alone." If food and shelter were all he needed, what more is he than an animal? There is a whole range above that, which is really more important, although we cannot always think so. A small object held close to the eyes will effectually shut out the view of the whole starry host, and in the same way the pressing necessity of the moment blinds most of us to the far greater necessity of the future. As the world is at present constituted there will always be a great number of people ready to endeavor to assuage man's physical sufferings, but only a small minority who are able to rise to an understanding of his mental and spiritual needs, and to make an effort to relieve them. Yet it is really true that a knowledge of mental control does give also a control of the physical body in

all its processes. It will maintain it in health; assist in the assimilation of food to an extent that borders on the marvellous; and conquer the nervous system, so that life becomes a pleasure, instead of a wearing conflict with forces that we find difficult to understand and often well-nigh impossible to govern. All this, however, is but a stepping stone to the real object of obtaining mental control, which is to transcend the mind and realize our higher Self, our real nature.

Man is the most complex being in the universe. He has risen above instinct, so-called, which is nearly unerring, and has reached the plane of reason. Scientists tell us that man has been upon this earth some hundreds of thousands of years. Some even maintain that he has been millions of years evolving to his present plane of consciousness. Yet, with all that, it is a plane still so new to the majority of the human race, that they are yet thousands of years from knowing how to best use reason and make it serve them wisely. As far as the physical world goes, the animals still have many advantages over us, as they rarely make mistakes, while man rarely fails to do so. Man has practically yet to learn how to use his reason to his best advantage, even in the material way; after that, he will have to make it serve him wisely on the mental plane; and then he will have to learn that there is a far higher plane, still material, the very existence of which is to most men an unknown quantity. That plane, in turn, is even farther below the really spiritual state than it is above the ordinary, every day experiences of life. Yet, to reach the goal and to realize our true Self, the Eternal Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute which is our real essence, we must attain to that lofty state of spirituality which can only be reached through mental control.

No matter what method may be taken to gain that control, it must be had. The history of every great sage, saint,

prophet, or mystic that the world has ever known, bears evidence to the truth of this assertion. Each travelled in his own way; but every one had to conquer his lower nature first, and then steadily fixing his mind upon the ideal he had conceived, he had to bend every power and every faculty with untiring perseverence to the endeavor to reach the desired end. And the measure of his success was equal to the measure of his power to control his mind and make it subject to his will. Concentration is the one essential to success in every phase of life. He who can best focus his energies in a given direction will be the most successful in attaining his object. One law rules the universe and what is true on one plane is true on all, though when only the lower planes are known, this may not clearly appear.

In India they use bullocks in a kind of treadmill to grind out the oil from certain seeds. As the Indian heart is tender towards animals, they do not like to beat the bullock to make him keep up his weary round, so they tie a wisp of hay to his yoke in such a way as to be just beyond his reach; on pushing forward in the effort to seize it, the poor bullock keeps going round and round and the oil is ground out. He does not know how he is being utilized, but the oil gets ground out just as well as if he did. How large a proportion of mankind is in exactly the same condition! They push forward in an eager desire to seize some coveted possession, which in turn keeps just beyond their reach; and thus they, like the bullock, turn a mill, the vast wheel of nature. They unconsciously do nature's work and keep the great wheel moving, but how little are they in advance of the Indian bullock! It is only when we awake to a clearer understanding and get a glimpse of our real place in this infinite wheel of life, and of the purpose of it all, that we really rise to the plane of the higher human consciousness, which in its turn

will expand into the Divine all-consciousness.

The first step upward is an all-important one, because, when taken voluntarily and consciously, it is the beginning of the effort that will end in Divine Realization. While we are blindly driven along by nature's laws, we must suffer more or less, as one who hurries over a rough and difficult road in utter darkness. When the sun shines, the road does not change, but how much easier is the effort to traverse it! We can avoid the holes and pitfalls, instead of falling into them and perhaps taking a long time to get out again. We can walk around the sharp stones and huge rocks, instead of cutting our feet and bruising our bodies against them; and in the bright light we can see clearly the distant goal and keep it ever before us, instead of wandering helplessly from the path and wasting valuable time in the endeavor to find it again. This is what it means to gain mental control, to be led by the spirit, instead of being "driven by the devil into the wilderness." Until man can rise to the plane of conscious endeavor, he has not even begun to be man in the true sense. Though wearing the outer form of man, he is yet but an animal in nature; and all the higher possibilities are as much a sealed book to him as to his horse or his dog.

The Vedanta is not, as some suppose, a merely intellectual system, devised for the practice of mental gymnastics. It is far more than that. It is the product of the soul-experiences of sages and saints who, having found the way to spiritual realization, left behind them full directions to help others to follow in their steps. It is a plain and practical path, "blazed" in the dense forest of ignorance and selfishness that we call the world, by the brave, self-sacrificing pioneers to a new world, a world of spirituality, a world of realization of that Infinite Essence which is the Self of every being. To those great ones, and to the saints and sages of

every religion, all mankind owes a debt of eternal gratitude, a debt that can only be repaid by imitating the examples set before it and striving in turn to keep the path open and help all to walk in it.

VILWAMANGAL THE SAINT

Drama by Girish Chunder Ghosh.

(Rendered from the Bengalee especially for "The Message of the East")

(Continued from September number)

Scene IV.

A forest. Vilwamangal seated.

Vilwamangal:—Ah Krishna! Ah Krishna! Where art Thou, My Lord? Appear before me. Thou knowest the innermost depths of my being. See how full of unspeakable yearning is my heart. It is said that Thou comest when the heart is full of yearning. O Friend of the poor, where art Thou, where art Thou? Where art Thou, O Lord?

(*He faints. Rakhal enters.*)

Rakhal (*whispering into Vilwamangal's ear*):—Krishna! Krishna! Krishna!

Vilwamangal (*regaining consciousness*):—Where is Krishna? Where is the sweet melody of the flute? Is He so cruel? Alas! Alas! All this suffering is in vain. He has not become mine. The days are passing. What is the use of this wretched body? I know, alas! I know that it is not in my lot to obtain Him. What shall I do? Where shall I go? Who will bring the Lord to me? Come Divine Flute-player. Appear before me. See, I am all alone! Come, come, O Friend of the helpless!

Rakhal:—Why, brother, why do you say you are alone? I am always with you, brother.

Vilwamangal:—Rakhal, you have come back? You will ruin me. You will again drag me into attachment. You see,

when I listen to your voice, I forget Krishna and I cannot call His name. Why, little brother, do you do so much for me? Go, little brother, go home. At your feet I beg you to go. Not having the Lord, I am consumed with longing. He has not become mine. O Rakhal, do you know what burning pain it means? If you realize it, go and bring the Lord to me. I shall become your slave and remain bound to you forever. Go, Rakhal, go away. Why daily add to my suffering? Having renounced the world, I have taken shelter at His feet. If He wishes to protect me, let Him; if He does not, He may kill me. I am very low! I am very wretched! Why do you come into this dense forest, Rakhal, to stay with this unworthy creature? O Rakhal, tell me, if you know, where I can find the light of my heart. Bring Him, bring Him to me and appease this love-hunger of my soul.

Rakhal:—You ask me to go away, brother; but you don't eat if I'm not here.

Vilwamangal:—I promise you that I shall eat. But you go away. Your sweet words make me forget the Lord.

Rakhal:—You will eat? But how will people bring food to you here? No one passes this way because they're afraid of the evil spirits.

Vilwamangal:—Go, my little brother. My mind is naturally distracted, do not make it more so. The Lord has not become mine. Time is constantly passing, it never stops. When shall I attain the Lord? (*The conch shell and temple bells are heard.*) That distant sound of the conch shell and bell tells me that the priests are performing the evening worship and another day is ended. The day is gone, but I have not found the Lord. Come, come! Where art Thou, Thou Treasure-house of all blessedness? If I die of longing, then I shall not see Thee. My heart is full of unrest, where shall

I find Thee?

Rakhal:—All right, brother! You call on Krishna. I'll sit here quietly and listen.

Vilwamangal:—No, you are only a little boy. Why should you sit here?

Rakhal:—You stay here in the forest and cry "I'm alone, I'm all alone in this world," and that makes me cry.

Vilwamangal:—Ah! This Rakhal will ruin me. I have not gained the Lord. Why any more attachment? Let me make an end to this life.

Rakhal:—Please don't, brother; it would hurt my heart so.

Vilwamangal:—Rakhal, who are you? How shall I escape from you? You will not even let me die.

Rakhal:—Brother, why not go to Vrindavana? Come to Vrindavana. You will find Krishna there. My words are not false. Anyway why not see whether they are true or untrue?

Vilwamangal:—Yes, come. We shall go to Vrindavana. I who am devoid of love will go to that land of love—that land of love on the bank of the Jamuna, where Lord Krishna plays His flute, giving joy even to the dumb cattle. Come, let us go there and call madly on the Name of the Lord. Let us go to Vrindavana, where my Lord dwells.

(*He starts to go.*)

Rakhal:—Why are you going in that direction? Vrindavana is this way.

Vilwamangal:—Is this that sweet Vrindavana? Where is then the humming of the bees? Where is the sound of the flute?

Rakhal:—Come with me. We shall see. (*Sings.*)

In the forest of Vrindavana I shall tend my cows,
I shall run about joyfully and play on my flute,

I love, Oh! I love so much to play,
That's why I come running so eagerly.
I shall find there many playmates after my heart.

(*Both go out.*)

(Concluded in November)

REPORTS

Swami Paramananda has returned and resumed charge of the meetings at the Vedanta Centre of Boston, delivering his first lecture of the new season on September 26th. His western journey, which covered two months, proved full of unexpected activity. Following his lectures in Minneapolis, he delivered two in San Francisco,—one before the Pacific Vedanta Centre and the other at the Hindu Temple, both being well attended. His subjects were, "True Spiritual Culture the Crying Need of the Day" and "True Universality and Tolerance." He also gave a special Talk to the students at the Hindu Temple on the value and necessity of practical spiritual living. On August 19th he went to Los Angeles in response to an earnest invitation from many friends of Vedanta in Southern California. He was warmly welcomed and taken to the house of one of the number. On the 20th he gave an informal Talk to a group of students, which was followed by a public lecture on Sunday the 22nd. The attendance at this and at the two succeeding Sunday lectures was very large. The subjects were "The Need of Spiritual Culture," "Evolution, Karma and Reincarnation," and "Self-Mastery and Superconsciousness." In addition, he delivered two lectures in the Universal Temple at Long Beach on "Tolerance" and "Concentration and Meditation." He also held a number of classes in Los Angeles, closing his three weeks of teaching with a final public lecture on Tuesday the 7th on "The Practical Application of Vedanta in our Daily Life." The Swami found it necessary to devote nearly every morn-

ing to interviews and many hours were also claimed by the various earnest friends of the teaching in Los Angeles.

* * * *

The following report has been received from a student of Vedanta in San Francisco: "Swami Prakashananda, in charge of the Pacific Vedanta Centre here, was one of the important speakers at the Congress of Religious Philosophies held in connection with the Panama Exposition. On the day devoted to Indian Thought in its various phases the Swami delivered an eloquent address on 'The Universality of Hinduism,' which deeply impressed the audience by its breadth and earnestness. The Swami, while acting as Vice-President of the International Buddhistic Congress, also gave two inspiring addresses on 'The Relation of Vedanta to Buddhism' and 'Ethics of Buddhism.'"

* * * *

The Vedanta Society of New York, under the charge of Swami Bodhananda, has moved to new quarters at 236 Central Park West. Here the Swami will continue his earnest work, holding the usual Sunday Services and bi-weekly classes. During the mid-summer the Society suspended its meetings and the Swami spent some time at Greenacre, where he was warmly welcomed by many friends whom he had made there in previous years.

* * * *

The Mayavati Charitable Dispensary, conducted by the Ramakrishna Mission in the foot-hills of the Himalayas twenty-five miles away from any railroad, is bringing ever increasing help to the poor villagers of the surrounding country. Although the Dispensary was able last January to occupy quarters specially erected for it, the demand for help has increased so rapidly that already the new building is proving inadequate. A recent report, indeed, shows that in the first five months of this year as many cases had been treated as in the twelve months of 1914.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. IV. NOVEMBER, 1915 NO. 11.

The vitality and power of the Vedanta lies in the fact that it takes cognisance of the variety existing in the religious temperament of men and women, and recognizes more than one method of realizing the divine nature in man. The Vedantin always views religion in two aspects,—the personal and the impersonal, the mobile and the immobile. The mythological, the symbological and the ritualistic portions of every religion, the form and the method which divide one religion from another, are personal and changeable. But that which marks for man a higher purpose and real life is eternal. Religion in its broad sense, as set forth in the Vedanta, is nothing more than going beyond the deceitful senses in order to know the reality of the universe and man. The only practical precepts of the religion of every human being are purity, charity and love. Men out of ignorance and vanity fight over the transient, the accessory, like the warriors over the shield in the fable. When, however, through the subjugation of the senses the glory of the soul is felt, when desire and selfish attachment are destroyed, then the higher facts of spiritual existence become apparent to us and we come face to face with the actualities of the universe.

Every effort to conquer egoism, every insignificant expression of compassion for the suffering of any creature, every manifestation of selfless love, means a step in the path

of spiritual progress. All else,—rituals, dogmas or symbols, are mere helps towards self-conquest. The one attempt of the Vedanta is to respect every man's ideal. Its aim is to place before all men lofty spiritual truths and show how they may be made active in their lives, so that each one may help the little he can to increase the sum total of universal good.

EASTERN AND WESTERN RELIGIOUS IDEALS

By Sister Devamata.

When we talk of East and West we must remember one great fact,—that spirituality has no geographical limits. Truth is the same at all points of the compass: the law of gravitation does not function more in Europe than in Africa or Asia, the facts of chemistry are as true in a Hindu as in a German laboratory, the heavens are as visible through a telescope in Tokio as in Cambridge. God's truths are vast, so vast that they transcend the limits even of this earth. How then can they be confined within the boundary lines of one country? How can they be limited to the words and tenets of one creed? They are universal; and as man becomes more universal, is he able to gather in and make his own more and more of the one all-pervading Truth. But in our present manifestation as human beings we cannot hope to grasp the whole of It at once. Manifestation means diversity—diversity not merely in expression, but diversity in power; and as different individuals possess divers gifts and grades of ability, so throughout the world the different nations have evolved varying gifts and powers. Were it not so, human society would be dull and colorless; for civilization depends for its beauty and richness on limitless variation just as the beauty of nature lies in its endless play of variety.

Experience has also proved that division of labor in-

creases efficiency. In a primitive society everybody does everything; but as social organization advances, it is found better for one group of men to devote themselves to one task and learn to do it extremely well, while another group takes up some other definite department of work. In the great cosmic economy the same rule obtains. No one nation or country is meant to be an isolated, self-sufficing unit. Each is expected to contribute its share of efficiency in some special direction; and that direction is determined by climate, soil, the topography of the country, by many different inner and outer conditions—the same conditions which shape the animal and plant life of any region. As the oak flourishes in one latitude and the banyan or fig tree in another, so certain racial tendencies attain their highest development in one nation or country, while others of equal value reach a fuller fruition elsewhere.

When the Aryan race began to migrate from central Asia, one branch we know turned towards Persia and pushed its way westward to Greece. There the mountains and rivers were small, all nature seemed amenable to man's will, so the ever-active Aryan began to bridle and use her, developing a wonderful objective civilization, which has its direct continuation in the Occident of today. The other branch made its way into India. Here nature was too mighty to be conquered. The mountains towered so high that even up to the present time some of them have not been scaled; the rivers flowed in such swift current that man could not hope to stem them; everywhere nature in her grandeur and power seemed to defy man; and the Indo-Aryan, awed by the marvel of it all, sat down and began to study her. Gradually he awoke to the conviction that never would he be the master, until he found within himself the equivalent of those powers which were rushing through nature with such irresistible force;

and in his effort to accomplish this, he gave to his mind a strong subjective bent. How to know the Ultimate, how to develop the faculties by which the Final Cause might be apprehended; these became the vital aims of life to him. "Is Brahman (the Absolute) the cause? Whence are we born? Whereby do we live and whither do we go? O ye who know Brahman, tell us at whose command we abide, whether in pleasure or in pain?" Such are the questions asked in one of the ancient Vedic Scriptures, the Svetasvatara-Upanishad, which show that even as early as 2000 B. C., when the West was still in savagery, the Indo-Aryans had penetrated to the inner depths of nature and were pushing their researches beyond the changing play of phenomena back to the Unchanging and Indestructible Noumenon. As time went on, more and more did they specialize in the study of these fundamental life problems, until in the realm of philosophy and metaphysics they developed a power of vision never since surpassed by any other nation. The proof of this lies in their language, an unmistakable measure of the culture of a people; for not only is Sanskrit still regarded as the richest of existing languages, but it contains a wealth of terms describing man's spiritual and psychological constitution for which no corresponding terms are to be found in any other tongue.

Thus the science of God-knowledge became India's special contribution to the world; and it is because of this that in speaking of Eastern religious ideals, we are forced to deal chiefly with Indian teaching. Japan may be called the body of the East. She has the greatest possible facility in all the arts; her whole country is an expression of beauty in external things. The senses are delighted at every turn and all of life runs with grace and deftness, in perfect harmony and order. China, on the other hand, represents the intellect of the East

—the intellect and moral sense. So great, we are told, is the integrity of the Chinese that they do not think it necessary to have written contracts, a man's word is enough; and their own national religion, Confucianism, is essentially a religion of reason and pure morality. But India stands as the Soul of the East. Out from her went the great spiritualizing wave of Buddhism, giving to more than half the world a new religious vision; through contact with her Mahommedanism also rose to the greater height of Sufiism; while it is now recognized that she even laid her touch upon Christianity through those Buddhist monks, who, settling in Palestine, strongly influenced the Essenes. And as in the slow process of manifestation, the body evolves first, the mind next and the soul last; so in this re-awakening of Asia, it was Japan who stirred first and amazed the world by her victory over Russia; then came the quivering of new life in China, with the establishment of a republic; and now India is rousing herself from her sleep of centuries. But through the long night her spiritual treasures were safely guarded, and today they are being gradually drawn from their hiding and offered once more to the world.

Efficiency necessarily implies a carefully developed system of training; and the higher the plane of efficiency, the more inclusive must the training be. It was therefore an inevitable result of the Indo-Aryans' persistent striving for ultimate knowledge that they should develop the most complete and comprehensive system of education known. To this they gave the name of *Yoga* (Union), because it taught man by precise and scientific methods how to gather up all his physical, mental, and moral energies, unite them into a dynamic whole and make them carry him to the fullest spiritual attainment. Man must first be ruler of his body, they said, since this is the instrument with which he must work;

so we find in Hatha-Yoga an exhaustive study of bodily control,—what man shall eat, how much he shall sleep, what postures he shall take, how, in a word, he shall regulate his entire physical life so as to make his body the most potent and perfect instrument possible. But this was only the beginning. Within was a finer instrument, the mind, the use of which he must master if he would pierce the veil of matter and perceive the essence within. They did not spend their time in inventing lifeless instruments. "Why not take this living instrument out of which the others are born?" they asked. "Why not tame the mind, unfold all its inherent possibilities and through it apprehend Truth directly?" So in Raja-Yoga they evolved a wonderful system of mind and nerve control, which gave to them such command of their mental energies that they were able to arrive at a subjective knowledge of the universe, no less precise than that which modern science has reached by its more objective processes. They realized that even the finest material instrument could not uncover the subtler facts of nature; whereas the mind, when focused, because of its incalculably swift vibration, had such penetrating power that it could lay bare her innermost secrets. By turning the concentrated mental vision on air or earth or water the astute observer would be able to perceive, not merely the constituent parts, but the actual chemical or physical action by which the substance was produced,—why two parts of hydrogen and one of oxygen made water, or how nitrogen, oxygen and carbonic gas formed air. Nor could one by any other way enter the causal realm.

Mere observation of effects can never lead to the Final Cause, they declared. The microscope or telescope can only suggest an hypothesis which a stronger lens may disprove. Truth is infinite, while all these things are finite, and the study of countless finite phenomena will not bring us knowl-

edge of the Infinite, any more than travelling round the circumference of a circle will acquaint us with its centre. That which is within the heart of the atom must be perceived by that which is within the heart of man. That central point where all law and life converge, has its counterpart in the human consciousness; and only by going there can we hope to touch the Source of existence and know the Ultimate. For this, however, concentration is not enough. Man must go further,—into the still depths of meditation. He must train his thought to flow in steady unbroken current as oil from one vessel to another. He must be able to sit hour after hour, day after day, penetrating deeper and deeper into the hidden chambers of his being until he touches its primal cause.

The great Indo-Aryan sages possessed this power in supreme measure. But it could only come as the result of intense specialization. When the Aryans first entered India, they had but one caste, the *Brahmana* or caste of God-knowers. At that time the forest was the seat of learning. In the quiet of some woodland near a stream or lake the teacher lived a life of austere simplicity; while round him gathered a group of boys, brought by their fathers at the age of eight or ten and left there for the whole term of their schooling. During this period the Teacher had unquestioned authority, not merely instructing but maintaining his pupils as his own children; for it was wholly contrary to Indo-Aryan tradition to barter education for money. Truth belonged to God, how could it be sold? At the close of the ten or twelve years, when the father came for his sons, it was customary for the teacher to offer vocational advice. "This youth," he would say, "will make a good soldier, that one a merchant; but this boy has a special aptitude for study. Leave him with me in the forest." The father rarely doubted the wis-

dom of the teacher. The boy was left; and so large hermitages grew up in the jungle, where the sole pursuit was search for Truth.

They married—not with the idea, however, of gaining a little personal happiness and gratification, but to create the best possible conditions for souls to incarnate. They sought in the quiet of some mountain forest to form a pure spiritual centre, where those who were yearning for the highest knowledge would find the proper environment and conditions for embodiment. As a result, it is said often children were born *Atma-Jnanis* or knowers of the Divine Self. The older ones, who had gained the power to explore the secret places of God, when they returned from their long inner journeys, would relate to the younger ones what they had seen in their wanderings, as fathers and mothers today tell their children of Paris or London; and these true stories of spiritual investigation and discovery, handed down from generation to generation, became what we know in our time as the Vedas. They are actual authentic records of scientific research in the realm of spirit. And no Scriptures lead man to such heights of metaphysical perception, none speak with such certainty about the ultimate facts of life, none make God more real, none picture the unity in variety of nature so vividly. Thoreau writes: "What extracts from the Vedas I have read fall on me like the light of a higher and purer luminary, which describes a loftier course through a purer stratum,—free from particulars, simple, universal." In defining the Supreme, they declare: "He is the one God, hidden in all beings, All-pervading, watching over all works, the Witness, the Perceiver, the only One, the Eternal among eternals, the Thinker among thinkers. He is the Inner Soul of all existences, the Ruling Power of all creation; and all creatures become one in Him. He is the Cause; unseen, but seeing;

unheard, but hearing; unperceived, but perceiving; unknown, but knowing. There is no other seer, hearer, perceiver or knower than He."

The Indo-Aryans' idea of the *Pranava* or Sacred Name, mentioned in every religion, illustrates the fundamental and penetrating character of their processes of thought. They said, the Ultimate Name of God must be universal. It must be comprehensible to every living being, therefore it cannot belong to any one tongue. It must lie behind all language, behind all individual expression, at the very root of articulate sound. "What is the first sound man or beast can utter?" they questioned. The first articulation of any creature, as it opens the throat, is "A." What is the last sound possible? When the lips close to pronounce "M"; and between these, as the sound rolls, it passes through "U," forming the word A-U-M. On this primordial word all articulate sound rests; therefore all language, all names must spring from it. Hence this must be the *Logos,* the Word that was in the beginning, the Final and most Sacred Name of God. In such manner did they sift all thought and carry it to its ultimate conclusion, back to the very boundary line of existence itself; for in their conception of life, as in their language, Existence and Truth are identical, the one is *Sat,* the other *Satya.*

But in thus dwelling at such length on the religious ideals of the East, there is no desire to minimize those of the West. Each have their place and value, but always the special task of Western nations seems to have been to apply rather than to discover Truth. While the East joins the ideas of Truth and being, the West more often connects Truth with doing. Beauty for beauty's sake, work for work's sake, love for love's sake: this is the Eastern point of view. Beauty, work, love for man's sake is the Western. In Western cosmology, mineral, plant, animal exist for man, even God is in his heaven

to protect and gratify him; but the wiser man of the East sees the human form only as one in a long succession of manifestations, through which the soul is passing in its march to perfection or liberation, and no one form exists for the other any more than one railway station for another. The West is concerned with the practice of virtue; the East strives rather, as Emerson puts it, to rise to the realm of virtue. The West is interested in the scenes and events of the journey, the thought of the East is fixed on the journey's end. The Western man in his religious life works from the outside in; the Eastern from the inside out, he seeks the kingdom of God first.

Yet there is no question of right and wrong in this divergence in method and point of view. The two merely mark different stages of growth, being related as youth to manhood; and each has its use and purpose. The highest vision must always be subjective; yet unless it is translated into action and made objective, it cannot benefit the world. The balance must be kept between the outer and the inner, the objective and the subjective. Extreme specialization on either side will produce inevitable deterioration, just as an overdose of medicine instead of curing, poisons. We see it at the present moment in both East and West. While nowhere as in India has there been evolved so lofty an ideal of universal oneness, probably nowhere today is there such division among men. In America, on the contrary, freedom, individualism is the cry; yet men are so closely bound in groups, so entangled in the meshes of organization and legislation, so held by public opinion, that they can scarcely draw a free breath. This shows that both are over-balancing in one direction and that each needs the other as a corrective.

But there is a deeper reason why the old Indo-Aryan teaching should come to the Christian world. The people of

the West are in the anomalous position of being Aryans with a Semitic religion. The form of Christianity prevalent today is Paulism; what is taught is chiefly St. Paul's interpretation of Jesus' teaching; and St. Paul was strongly Judaic in his trend of mind. The questions on which he dwells at such length in his epistles,—circumcision, bodily resurrection, sin, are all essentially Jewish. Christ's message on the contrary was more distinctly Aryan in its form. The idea of the Fatherhood of God, so emphasized in His teaching, came through Hellenic influence; yet when it was first preached in Palestine by Rabbi Hillel fifty years before the birth of Christ, the Sanhedrim pronounced it blasphemy. Christ layed insistent stress on renunciation, but the Jew went away sorrowing when he was asked to sell all he had. His ideal was to keep the moral law, to fulfill faithfully his every duty as a householder and to live long in the land of his fathers. Baptism was an ancient Indian rite, brought into Palestine probably by Buddhist missionaries; while we read in Earnest Renan's "Life of Christ," where he speaks of John the Baptist, known to have been an Essene: "He led there a life like that of a *Yogi* of India. . . . We might imagine ourselves transported to the banks of the Ganges, if special features had not revealed in this recluse the last descendant of the grand prophets of Israel. . . . The teachers of the young were also at times a species of anchorites, resembling to some extent the *Gurus* (spiritual teachers) of Brahmanism. In fact, might there not in this be a remote influence of the *Munis* (sages) of India? . . . We may believe at all events that many of the external practices of John, of the Essenes and of the Jewish spiritual teachers of this time, were derived from influences then but recently received from the far East."

The same influences are again apparent in the early Christian Church, especially among the followers of the Alex-

andrian schools, where East and West mingled freely. Also in the writings of the oldest Church Fathers we find a restatement of certain of the ancient Vedic teachings, such as reincarnation, evidently prevalent among the Christians as late as 538 A. D. when Justinian proclaimed: "Whoever shall support the mystical presentation of the pre-existence of the soul and the consequently wonderful opinion of its return, let him be Anathema." The more we analyze the words of Jesus in the light of Aryan teaching, the more we realize how strongly Aryan is His message. If then the Western world today is to understand and live the Christ teaching, it must regain its Aryan point of view, return to its own racial tendencies in religion. But not only is Christianity Aryan, it is also strongly Oriental; and he who would enter into its true spirit must strive to cultivate in some measure at least the Oriental consciousness. Nowhere has the Aryan tradition been preserved in such purity as in India, nowhere has the Oriental consciousness found such full expression; and if at the present moment India is coming to the West, it is in response to a yet unspoken, almost unconscious call for a new spiritual vision within Christianity. Dr. Cuthbert Hall recognizes this in his "Christ and the Eastern Soul," where he says, addressing the Hindus: "Cling to the contemplative life: your glorious heritage, your peculiar strength. It has given you elements of personality of which the West stands in need and shall one day come seeking at your hand." And again: "As I grew to apprehend the qualities of the Oriental Consciousness, I saw their potential value for the higher interpretation of the Christian religion."

Every word spoken by Christ came from a whole and perfect vision of God, and only when man can reach that same height of God-vision will he be able to grasp their meaning. He cannot hope to attain this height, however, without

systematic spiritual education—without training his superconscious faculties. The real Truth-seeker, whether in religion or science, opens himself to the light whether it shines from the East or the West. And as students in the past have gone to Paris to study art and to Germany to study music, so they will in time turn to India to acquire, not a new form of religion, but the most efficient method of developing the religious consciousness; for behind her "Seers lies the long Indian summer of the soul, thousands of years of the contemplative life," to quote Dr. Hall again, and it is this which has given her "qualifications for world efficiency" in the higher realms of education. When this is generally acknowledged, then the Aryans of East and West may once more join hands and out of the reunion must come a new and richer civilization.

Unhappy Asia! Do you call it unhappy Asia? This land of divine needs and divine thoughts! Its slumber is more vital than the waking life of the rest of the globe, as the dream of genius is more precious than the vigils of ordinary men. Unhappy Asia, do you call it? It is the unhappiness of Europe over which I mourn. Benjamin Disraeli

Perhaps no loftier idea of the Godhead has ever existed in man's mind than that of the composers of some of the Indian Vedas and Upanishads produced many hundreds, if not thousands of years B. C.; indeed Hooker's prayer and many other Christian prayers grander and nobler would not seem at all out of place if they were put into the mouth of an Indian forest-sage or a prehistoric Brahman.

R. F. Johnson M. A. (Oxon) F. R. G. S.

The Eastern, whatever else he possesses, has the sense of God. Religion's home is in the East. The Eastern walks amid the forms of force of which we talk so glibly, and feels God. —Rev. Heber Newton.

THE UPANISHADS

Extract by Swami Saradananda.

The poetry of the Vedas is wholly religious. Had the Aryans any other kind of poetry, it is lost entirely, never to be found again. Never was such an amount of religious poetry composed anywhere in the world. That the Aryans of India had evolved a high order of civilization when the Vedas were composed, there is ample internal evidence in the Vedas themselves. They were a band of strong and sturdy people, full of faith in themselves and faith in God. The hard winter of the Asiatic plains, where they must have spent hundreds of years in travels and settlements; the mighty rivers rushing towards the sea, which they must have passed in their gradual passage to India; the strong whirlwinds in the northern deserts and the passes of the mountains; and lastly, the grand Himalayas rising tier above tier, as if to the very gates of heaven—impressive, overwhelming, and sublime spectacles, all of which must have contributed their quota to those deep emotions depicted in the hymns of the Vedas. With each fresh advance in the plains newer and newer experiences came to those minds and embodied themselves in the other Vedas and the Upanishads.

Apart from their importance as a deep philosophical literature, the hymns of the Vedas and the Upanishads have a literary value of their own, unsurpassed by any literature of the kind. Coming from a vigorous people, they are full of life and vigor, purity and simplicity. In later times, some hundreds of years before the birth of Buddha, the Vedas were classified into the four great divisions, the Rik, the Sama, the Yajus, and the Atharvan. Each of these divisions in its turn was divided into three subdivisions—the Samhitas, the Brahmanas, and the Upanishads. The Samhitas are the collection of hymns. The Samhita of the Rik-Veda alone contains 1,017

hymns, consisting of 10,580 verses. The Brahmanas are written in prose, and consist of directions how and where in the order of the sacrifices the hymns should be recited to get the full effect. The last of these sub-divisions is the Upanishads, the books which express the philosophy of the Vedas. They form the foundation on which rests the grandest of all religious philosophies,—the Vedanta Sutras and the commentaries on them by the great philosopher, sage and religious reformer, Sankaracharya.

The characteristics of the Samhita poetry are its sincerity, vigor and diligent search after truth. The poetry of the Upanishads, on the other hand, is full of power yet full of peace; concise, yet appealing to the interest and emotions to the highest degree. The former is like the language of some inexperienced youth, powerful in its rashness and exuberance of life; while the latter is like that of the fully developed man, controlled and chaste and conscious of his own power. In the former there is the inferior devotion through fear; in the latter there is that highest devotion which knows no fear, which loves its beloved for love's sake, seeks no reward, finding in love its own fruition. In the former, God is worshipped because he will reward or punish according to our acts; in the latter, the worshipper has found Him within himself, as "the soul of his soul, as the light of his eye," as the beauty in all that is beautiful. "He vibrates and He does not vibrate, He is far and He is near, he is within all and He is beyond all." "Through every hand He works, through every foot He moves, through every eye He sees, through every ear He hears, through every mouth He eats: He pervades everything."

The Upanishads were called the "forest books, or books read in the forest." In all India the life of a man was divided into four stages—the student life, the family life, the forest life, and the monk life. The sacrifices and rituals of

the Vedas relate to the two former stages of a man's life, when he is struggling for name and fame, wealth, beauty, prosperity, power and rulership over his fellow-beings, and feels these to be the be-all and the end-all of existence. Then, when life's evening sets in and makes the same man more calm and controlled, when the bitter and sweet experiences of life leave him wiser and make him thirst for something higher and more peaceful, when after fulfilling his duties towards his family and country he is ready to give place in turn to others who are coming up, he was expected to retire in those beautiful forests on the slopes of the Himalayas, or by the side of the Ganges, to meditate upon the deep mysteries of life and death. There, amidst the singing of birds and murmuring of brooks, in the calm repose of the shades of night and dawn, he came face to face with nature and felt himself part and parcel of it. There the sages dived within themselves, till they went to the very root of mind and consciousness through meditation and brought forth the answer to the vexed problems of life. There they realized their oneness with the Infinite Being, and found the cause, both material and efficient, of this universe in that Love Absolute. "From Love Absolute has all this universe come out, in Love Infinite does it live after it is born, towards that Love unlimited it flows, and into it ultimately it enters."

Can we wonder any more why the Upanishads are full of living poetry? This highly poetic mode of living brought forth its manifestation in the beautiful language of the *Aranyakas,* or forest books. Yet these books but dimly express what they felt. For is there any embodiment in language which is equal to the thing which is thought and felt? Every expression is a degeneration, for the spirit can only be revealed in the letter and "the letter killeth." Who can fathom the feeling of the bard of nature when, enraptured with his realization, he first gave vent in those shady forests to the deep

thrill which was stirring his breast in such language as this: "Thou Sun! Thou hast covered the face of truth by thy golden disc; do thou uncover it to the vision of one who thirsts after true religion. Progenitor and controller of all, thou Sun! withdraw thy rays awhile, that I may look at thy blissful form, the real cause of the power. That form of thine is one with the Infinite Being, and I too am one with Him."

The theme of the poetry of the Upanishads is to express the inexpressible, to know the unknowable, to bring within the bounds of speech and thought that which lies beyond, to clothe the thought of the Infinite in our poor finite human language. No wonder that the song of the Rishis appears in many places to be paradoxical and incomprehensible. Yet the language used, the imageries employed, bring you to the very door of the deity. Nature seems to stop and lift her veil as you sit listening to the wondrous song; and the Infinite, the Deity, appears to you in such real and tangible form that you seem to feel that you can touch It, grasp It, realize It, and make It your own. Again the song rises higher and higher in cadence, everything seems to melt before your transfixed gaze; the earth disappears, the sun, the moon, the stars, all seem to grow dim and faint before the ocean of Light which is revealed before your eyes. You appear to grow larger and larger until you cover the universe, the little personality vanishes entirely and you realize that you are one with the ocean of unbounded Love. Thus with the flow of the song you are carried to the very door of the Deity, a deep calm and repose settle over your mind, like the spirit moving on the face of the waters, and you feel that nothing can disturb you in this day's existence, nothing can destroy you, that your existence lies beyond death and the grave, beyond the changes of body and mind.

"It, the Knower, neither is born nor does It die, nor was

It born in some past time. It is birthless, eternal, ever-existent; old and yet ever new; It is not killed with the killing of the body. If the slayer thinks he can slay, or the slain that he can be slain, both of them know not the truth; it neither slays nor is slain."

"Void of form, yet existing in all that has form; changeless, yet remaining in all that is changeable; knowing that Self, the Lord, the great One, the enlightened man never grieves again."

VILWAMANGAL THE SAINT

Drama by Girish Chunder Ghose.

(Rendered from the Bengalee especially for "The Message of the East")

(Continued from October number)

ACT V.—SCENE I.

Vrindavana. Mount Govardhana. Chintamani seated.

Chintamani.—Mind, in those other days thou didst dress thyself in various ways to charm him; tell me now in what dress thou wouldst approach him to obtain his mercy? Body, I decked thee with golden ornaments, but thou didst bring me only shame. Now holy ashes shall be thy sole ornament, else that great saint will not be merciful to me. (*She rubs the holy ash over her body.*) Never hast thou been so richly adorned before! And now my hair! Hair, most deceitful of all art thou! Thou didst make me believe thou wert my friend, but all the while thou wert trying to entice others to their ruin. Beguiled by thy delusive beauty, I have dressed thee with greatest care; but thou hast proved false and treacherous, and hast caused my downfall. Today I shall dress thee in a new way, for by the old ways thou canst not please the great saint. Through his grace shalt thou obtain Krishna the Lord. Alas! I am of all, the most fallen and degraded. O! How shall I attain the Lord of the helpless!

(*She attempts to cut her hair.*)

(*The boy Rakhal enters.*)

Rakhal (*snatching the knife from her hand.*)—Shame! Shame! Sister, why are you cutting your hair? Is it right to cut the hair? No! No! Don't cut it.

Chintamani.—Ah! Who is this boy? How lovely he is! The very sound of his voice soothes my heart.

Rakhal.—You also call "Krishna, Krishna," don't you? Shame, sister; you don't answer me! I'm going away!

Chintamani.—Who are you?

Rakhal.—Shame, sister, don't you know how to speak sweetly? You should say, "Who are you, little brother?" And I shall answer: "Why should I tell you, sister?"

Chintamani.—Why shouldn't you tell me, brother? (*To herself.*) Ah! All the fire of suffering within me is as it were extinguished. Why are you not speaking now, brother?

Rakhal.—Between you and me there is love.

Chintamani.—Yes, brother, between you and me there is love.

Rakhal.—Very well! But tell me, sister, do you love Krishna more or do you love me more?

Chintamani.—Alas! I am wretched and devoid of love, what do I know of love for Krishna, the Lord?

Rakhal.—Sister, tell me, do you want Krishna or do you want me? I know you want Krishna. I'm going away.

Chintamani.—Why are you going, little brother? Why don't you listen?

Rakhal.—You have come here to Vrindavana. Tell the truth: do you want Krishna or do you want me?

Chintamani.—I want Krishna and also I love you.

Rakhal.—No, sister. I don't take such love. You must choose whichever one you want. I'm not asking you to take me.

(*Beggar enters.*)

Beggar.—Ah! Ah! What a beautiful shepherd boy that is!

Rakhal.—Brother, there is love between you and me.

Beggar.—Yes, brother, between you and me there is love.

Rakhal.—You thief! You are talking of love, then why are you hiding your bundle from me? Give it to me (*snatches it from the beggar's hand*).

Beggar.—There's nothing in it.

Rakhal.—No? Then why have you tied it in so many knots?

Beggar.—It's true. You can see. I tied all those knots absent-mindedly. (*To himself.*) Even though I have come to Vrindavan, yet my hands, my feet and mind are still mine.

Rakhal (*handing back the bundle*).—Don't tie any more knots in it.

Beggar.—Very well, brother Rakhal, I'll throw it away; I won't tie it up any more. (*He throws it away.*)

Chintamani.—But, brother, now you're making love to someone else.

Rakhal.—Why shouldn't I, sister?

Chintamani.—All right, then, there is quarrel between you and me.

Rakhal.—Then I'll go away and I won't come again unless you call me very, very hard.

(*Rakhal starts to go.*)

Chintamani.—Wait! Wait!

Rakhal.—No, I won't wait!

(*He goes out.*)

Beggar.—Ho there! Stop! Stop!

Chintamani.—Let him go. Perhaps he is hungry.

Beggar.—I would have brought some food and fed him

here. But see, there comes Pagalini.

Chintamani.—Yes. Perhaps now the Lord will be merciful towards me. As I look at Mother's face, I feel hopeful. Through Divine Mother's grace the Gopis obtained Sri Krishna, so through my mother's grace perhaps my heart's desire may be fulfilled. But to whom is my mother talking? Who is that illumined *Sannyasi* (ascetic)?

Beggar.—Now that Pagalini has come to Vrindavana, perhaps things will get better for me.

(*Enter Pagalini and Somagiri with his disciples.*)

Chintamani.—O mother, compassionate mother, you are truly my mother! You have not forgotten me, my merciful mother.

Pagalini.—No, my daughter, I am nothing. But ask the father here (*Somagiri*), he will instruct you.

Chintamani.—Through your words I left my home; now again through your words I beg the father to bless me that my heart's desire may be fulfilled. (*To Somagiri.*) Father, what will become of me? I am most sinful. Will the Lord be merciful to me?

Somagiri.—Child, thou art so full of devotion, surely the Lord will grant thee His mercy.

Chintamani.—Father, I have devotion? Devoid of love, hard, sinful, like a dry barren desert is my heart, not a drop of water there. Repentance like a blazing fire burns in it day and night! With such a heart how can I have devotion? What can I offer at the feet of the all-loving Krishna? Father, tell me graciously, what shall I do to be saved?

Somagiri.—What can I say? Here in Vrindavana there is a holy man named Vilwamangal; go and take refuge at his feet. Then you will be saved.

Chintamani.—Father, you are my teacher. So long as you have said that I shall be saved, I believe it with all my heart.

But Father, I fear, for I am a great sinner. Hundreds of times have I wronged him.

Somagiri.—Child, he is a great saint. A saint bears resentment towards no one.

Chintamani.—I hope, Father, that your words may not prove untrue because of my unhappy lot. Tell me where he lives. Since I arrived in Vrindavana, I have been searching for him, but I have not seen him anywhere.

Pagalini.—You have not found him? I shall take you to him.

Beggar.—Mother, how is it that you have forgotten your son?

Pagalini.—Why should I forget? With the father's permission, you may also come with me.

Beggar.—Father, is there any hope for me?

Somagiri.—You are a *sadhu* (holy man). This Vrindavana is the land of bliss. Through the grace of the Blissful Lord no one remains joyless here.

Beggar.—But, Father, I've been a thief.

Somagiri.—Then why do you not try to steal the Lord?

Beggar.—Master, if I could, that would indeed be a glorious theft.

Somagiri (*to Pagalini*).—Mother, you stay with your children. I shall make the circuit of the sacred Mountain.

(*Pagalini, Chintamani and the Beggar go out. The disciples sing.*)

HYMN

Glorious Vrindavan! Glorious Saviour of men!
Glorious Govardhana, spirit-filled rock!
Glory unto God! Glory unto God! Glory unto God!
Soul-pervaded Jamuna and thou sacred dust of the way!
Deep forest shadows filled with the flute's soft sweet note!
Glory unto God! Glory unto God! Glory unto God!

Joy and bliss! Joy and bliss! Joy and bliss over all!
Stainless art Thou! Refuge of the wise and pure-hearted!
Glory unto God! Glory unto God! Glory unto God!

REPORTS

The Ramakrishna Mission in India, of which the Vedanta Work in America forms a part, has been laboring tirelessly for several months to relieve the intense suffering in the famine-stricken districts of Bengal. The area of their activity has been persistently extended until now it includes several hundred villages, while the number of individuals helped in a few weeks amounted, so their report tells us, to 20,866. Yet one of the workers writes: "Famine is wearing a grimmer aspect. Save a few well-to-do families who are living on one meal a day, the rest are getting a meal every two or three days. Whenever we enter a village for inspection we find boys and girls stretched in a line on the ground looking half-dead. They piteously appeal to us for help. The boys and girls are mostly clad in rags; and the women have such scanty covering that they slink away at sight of us. They have not even a bit of cloth in which to take their dole of rice." Cholera, dysentery and other serious diseases have made their appearance as the result of eating roots and leaves harmful to the digestive system; and the problem of relief is no longer merely one of feeding the hungry, but of caring for the sick and dying. While one division of workers go out to distribute aid, others are begging elsewhere for money and food to supply the relief bands with necessary funds and provisions. Many of the local government boards are co-operating with the Mission, while its president is sending urgent appeals for contributions. Fortunately in some districts the harvesting of the crops has bettered the condition of the people, so centers there have been closed and new ones

opened in districts where the distress is unabated. "The task before us is yet a difficult one," the report reads, "and requires the prompt co-operation from all communities irrespective of caste, creed or color * * * to save hundreds of precious lives who but for our help will fall victims to the clutches of famine."

* * *

Although the new season's work has scarcely begun, the numbers attending the various services and meetings at the Vedanta Centre of Boston have already exceeded previous years, and many new members have connected themselves with the Centre. On October 19, an informal reception was held for the students and friends, to which a large number came. The well-known musician, Mr. John Orth, gave a most interesting and impressive talk on his master, Franz Liszt, laying special emphasis on the simplicity of his character and on the underlying spiritual quality of his work. Liszt, he said, never asked any remuneration for his instruction, accepting a pupil wholly on his merits without regard to what he was able to offer, which reminds us of the method followed by the *Gurus* or teachers in India. Mr. Orth also kindly gave two selections on the organ. A Hindu student now at Harvard, Mr. Barman, next told in a graphic and amusing manner something of the customs in Bengal. After refreshments and some social conversation, the evening closed with a short talk by the Swami Paramananda, in which he said that the value of such gatherings was to create a bond of fellowship and make us realize that we all belong to one great human family, whatever may be our cast or creed or nationality.

The informal reception held every Saturday afternoon from four to six at The Vedanta Community House will be resumed on November 6. All members and friends of the Centre will be welcome.

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